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El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro



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Gabrielle G. Palmer and Stephen L. Fosberg

EDITED BY
June-el Piper

DESIGN / LAYOUT BY
Donna Carpio

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CONTRIBUTORS

Keith Bakker has an M.A. degree in furniture conservation from Antioch University and the Smithsonian Institution. He is currently the director of furniture conservation at the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in Boston.

Lawrence Beal is a community planner and job captain at the National Park Service Denver Service Center.

David M. Brugge has spent most of his career as an anthropologist working among the Navajo people. He is now retired, but still busy. He is the author of *The Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute: An American Tragedy*.

Mary Jean Cook has a B.A. degree in music from the University of Oklahoma. She is an independent researcher and author of the book *Loretto: The Sisters and Their Santa Fe Chapel* (1984).

Former curator of The Anschutz Collection in Denver, **Elizabeth Cunningham** is a writer and independent art historian. Her most recent projects include an essay on the history of puppetry related to the marionettes of Santa Fe artist Gustave Baumann, and a history of theater in Taos. She is currently working with Robert R. White on a monogram and catalog raisonne on Taos Art Colony founder Ernest L. Blumenschein.

José Antonio Esquibel is a genealogical researcher. He studies and writes about families of the Spanish colonial era and is author of more than 40 articles, including “New Light on the Jewish-converso Ancestry of Don Juan de Oñate: A Research Note” (*Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 7[2], 1998) and “Sacramental Records and the Preservation of New Mexico Family Genealogies from the Colonial Era to the Present” (in *Seeds of Struggle, Harvest of Faith: Papers of the Catholic Cuarto Centennial Historical Conference*, LPD Press, Albuquerque, 1998). Besides co-authoring *The Royal Road: El Camino Real from Mexico City to Santa Fe* (UNM Press, 1998), he is co-author with John B. Colligan of a forthcoming book titled *The Spanish Recolonization of New Mexico: An Account of the Families Recruited at Mexico City in 1693* (Hispanic Genealogical Research Center of New Mexico). In addition, he has served as a research consultant for the Vargas Project (University of New Mexico) and the Camino Real Project. He was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Historical Society of New Mexico. He lives in Santa Fe with his daughter, Jael, and is employed with the New Mexico Department of Health.

Stephen L. Fosberg has an M.A. in anthropology from the University of New Mexico. He is the New Mexico Bureau of Land Management state archaeologist and is working to develop cooperative cultural resource management programs with Mexico.

Patricia Fournier has a Ph.D. in anthropology from the Autonomous National University of Mexico. She is a full-time professor at the National School of Anthropology and History in Mexico City.

Mark L. Gardner, an independent historian and writer, lives with his family along the Old Ute Pass wagon road in Colorado.

Robin Farwell Gavin has an M.A. in Spanish colonial art history from the University of New Mexico. She is curator of Spanish colonial collections at the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe.

Rick Hendricks has a Ph.D. in Ibero-American Studies from the University of New Mexico. He is an editor of The Vargas Project at UNM, for which he has co-authored four documentary volumes. He has also co-edited *The Navajos in 1705: Roque Madrid's Campaign Journal*.

David V. Hill is currently enrolled as a Ph.D. student in the anthropology department at the University of Texas at Austin. He has conducted extensive archaeological research regarding the production and use of native and imported ceramics in Spanish colonial society.

James Ivey has a B.A. in history from the University of Texas at Austin. He is a research historian for the National Park Service, Southwest Region, and has authored studies of Fort Union, the Big Bend region, and Salinas Pueblos National Historic Park.

Oakah L. Jones is professor emeritus of history, Purdue University, and now resides in Albuquerque. His M.A. and Ph.D. are from the University of Oklahoma. He taught Latin American History and the Spanish Borderlands for thirty-three years at the U.S. Air Force Academy, the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, Florida State University in the Panama Canal Zone, Purdue University, and St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas. His research interests are the Spanish frontier in North America, colonial Latin America, Mexico, and Guatemala. He is the author of five books, editor of three, and author of numerous articles and book reviews.

Frances Levine is the head of the Arts & Sciences division at Santa Fe Community College, where she teaches classes in New Mexico history and the ethnohistory of the Pueblo and Hispanic communities of the Southwest. She holds a doctorate in anthropology from Southern Methodist University. Her doctoral research examined historic settlement and land use on three Pecos River land grants in New Mexico. She has also completed an analysis of sacramental records from the church at Pecos Pueblo, which will be published by UNM Press in 1999. She has served as an expert witness on land and water use adjudications, testifying on behalf of the State of New Mexico and numerous acequia commissions, and she recently completed a comparative study of Tasmanian Aboriginal ethnohistory during a research fellowship at Australian National University.

Michael P. Marshall is the director of archaeological projects for Cibola Research Consultants, based in Corrales, New Mexico. He has published numerous articles and reports on Southwestern prehistory and ethnohistory, and he has particular interests in Chacoan Anasazi culture, early Navajo culture history, and Spanish colonial archaeology. From 1988 to 1990 he completed a regional archaeological survey of the Camino Real in New Mexico as part of the Camino Real Project under a research grant from the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division.

Skip Miller is co-director and curator of the Kit Carson Historic Museums, which administers the Martinez Hacienda, the Blumenschein Home and Museum, and the Kit Carson Home. With degrees in ceramics and Native American art history, he is an adjunct faculty member at the University of New Mexico/Taos. He has worked in the past as an archaeologist at the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff and as a curator of contemporary art at the Tucson Museum of Art. Miller has worked as a potter since 1967.

Gabrielle G. Palmer has a Ph.D. in Spanish colonial art history from the University of New Mexico and is the director of the Camino Real Project.

John A. Peterson is assistant professor of anthropology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Texas at El Paso. He has been conducting studies of Spanish colonial sites in the Southwest and northern Chihuahua and serves as chair of the Socorro Historical Landmark Commission on the Mission Trail of El Paso.

Donna Pierce received her B.A. and M.A. from Tulane University and her Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico. She is the curator of Spanish colonial art at the Denver Art Museum. She also serves as consulting curator for the Spanish Colonial Arts Society Museum and El Rancho de las Golondrinas Museum in Santa Fe. She has participated in exhibitions at various institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. She has contributed to numerous publications, including *Mexican Churches and Mexican Celebrations* with Eliot Porter (UNM Press, 1987 and 1990), *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990), *Cambios: The Spirit of Transformation in Spanish Colonial Art* (Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1992), *Converging Cultures* (Brooklyn Museum, 1996), and *Spanish New Mexico* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 1996).

Dan Scurlock is a consulting naturalist, archaeologist, and environmental historian. He has an M.A. in anthropology.

Cordelia Thomas Snow is a historic sites archaeologist with more than 25 years of experience in the Southwest. Although her primary interest and fieldwork have been with colonial sites and materials, she has also studied nineteenth-century forts and railroads.

Mary D. Taylor has spent the past 25 years researching the history of Mesilla and the Rio Intermedio, of which the Ramón Ortiz chapter published in this volume is a part. It was through her archival study that the Archdiocese of Durango granted New Mexico State University permission to microfilm their records, which date back to the 1600s. She is a graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso and has received awards for her research contributions from historical societies in both New Mexico and Texas.

J. Paul Taylor y Romero's Hispanic ancestry traces back to the 1598 colonization movement in New Mexico. As government officials, soldiers of the crown, and merchants these family members traveled the Camino Real. Taylor's interest in history has drawn him to those elements of culture dealing with Hispanic religious traditions, hence "La Caravana: A Vehicle for the Transmission of Culture" (his contribution to this volume). Taylor has earned three degrees and was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Laws from New Mexico State University.

Robert J. Torrez is State Historian at the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe. He is also president of the Historical Society of New Mexico and author of numerous articles on New Mexico history.

Mark Winter is a noted scholar, dealer, and collector of Southwest textiles. He is curator of, and was instrumental in assembling, The Durango Collection, one of the most comprehensive private collections of Southwest textiles in existence. Winter guest-curated "Patterns of Prestige," an exhibit on Saltillo sarapes, for the Museum of American Folk Art in New York City. He has three children, Amber, Justin, and Colin, and he owns American Renaissance Gallery in his home town of Pagosa Springs, Colorado.

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FOREWORD

THE 1993 COMPILATION of historical essays on El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, published as our Cultural Resources Series No. 11, proved to be extremely popular. It has now sold out of its second printing and a third is contemplated. The book has been adopted for use by public schools, service organizations, and professional historians, as well as tourists and other members of the public.

Because the publication on the Camino Real was such a resounding success, Dr. Gabrielle Palmer, President of Camino Real Project, Inc., offered to compile a second collection of papers from current researchers. This volume is largely the result of her efforts. A few additional articles were added by myself to provide a more complete picture of current issues surrounding trail management. The papers, therefore, were written in a variety of contexts. Some were originally delivered at conferences. Others were prepared as analytical reports for field schools. Still others are more synthetic and seek to evaluate the significance and overall contribution of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro to the history and development of the American Southwest. The intent of assembling these papers is to present a popular history of the trail in terms that the general reader and visitor to New Mexico can appreciate.

The 1993 publication led to a series of cooperative projects with Dr. Gabrielle Palmer, other state and federal agencies, universities, and our colleagues from Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). Annual international conferences on the Camino Real now bring archeologists, historians, geographers, art historians, and citizens of trail-side communities together to discuss how it can be preserved.

Excavations at the *paraje* (campsite) of San Diego were completed in 1994 by the New Mexico Bureau of Land Management (BLM), New Mexico State University, and INAH. At the archeological field school, students and professional staff from Mexico and the United States developed common survey, excavation, and laboratory procedures in an effort to study our joint patrimony.

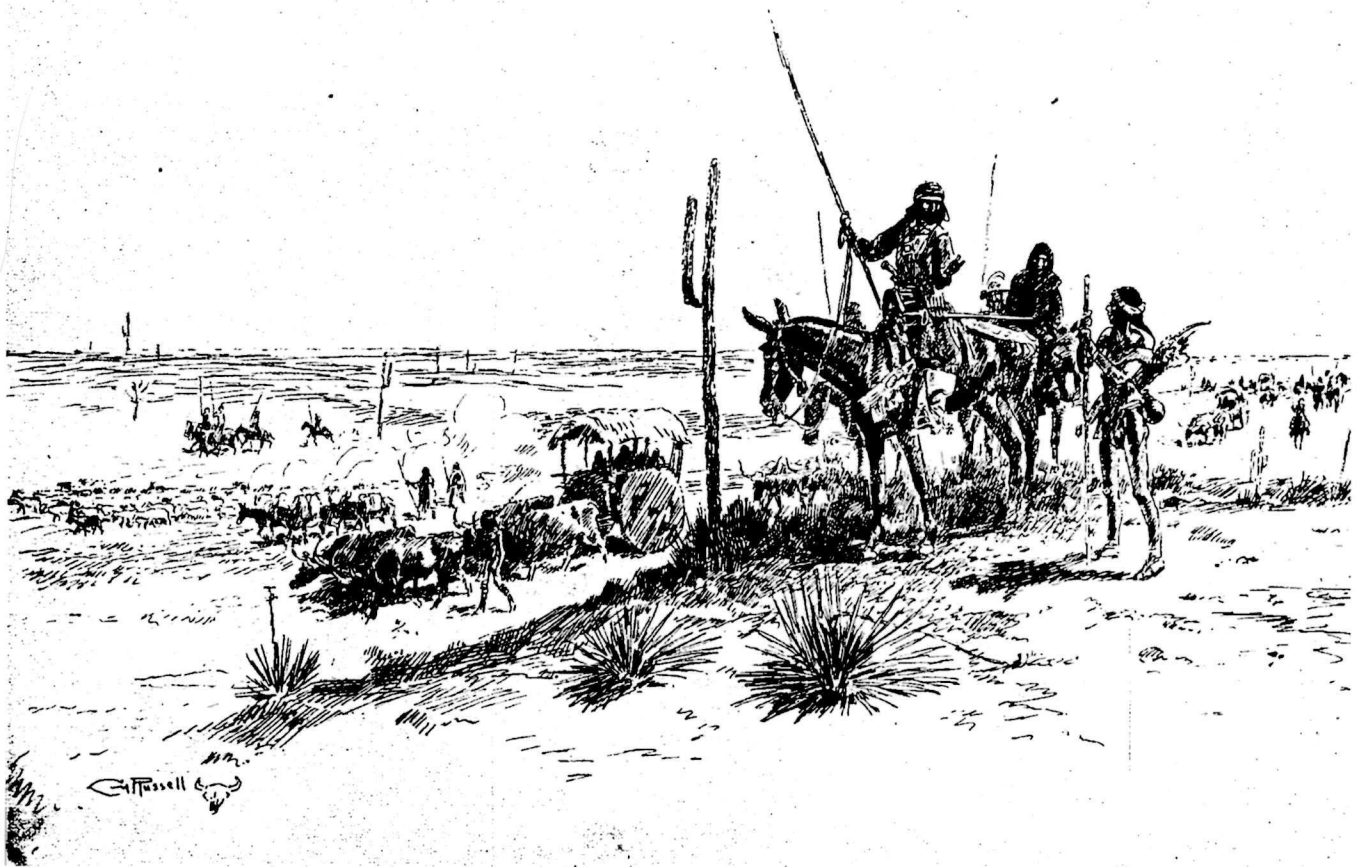
Another cooperative project, this time between the BLM and the National Park Service's Spanish Colonial Research Center, is now underway. In the first phase of a long-term study of *parajes* along the Camino Real, documentary research will locate the major seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century trail-related campsites in New Mexico. Subsequent research will include archeological field recordation, site testing, and public interpretation of historic travel and camping along the Camino Real.

The BLM, INAH, and NPS signed a Letter of Cooperation on the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in July of 1998. The three agencies pledged to share knowledge, resources, and staff to improve the management, protection, and interpretation of this internationally significant resource. A strategic plan now being finalized commits the agencies to a series of joint research, conservation, scientific exchange, and cultural tourism projects.

The most significant trail partnership now underway is the Camino Real International Heritage Center. This state monument will be administered by the State Monuments Division of the Museum of New Mexico in cooperation with the BLM. Located between the towns of Socorro and Truth or Consequences, the interpretive center will provide a focus for the study and interpretation of the trail in New Mexico. Architectural and exhibit planning have been completed. The 1999 New Mexico legislature with support from the governor has just passed appropriations to match construction dollars pledged by the BLM. Construction of the facility should begin early next year.

With the year 2000, the Camino Real's history stretches into its sixth century. There is every indication that the trail continues to integrate this region, binding and uniting people and cultures along its course. *Adelante!*

—Stephen L. Fosberg, Series Editor—July 1999



Oñate's March into New Mexico Country.
Charles M. Russell sketch.
Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth.

PREFACE

WHEN, SOME YEARS AGO, the Camino Real Project began the earnest task of raising the public's awareness of New Mexico's historic Camino Real, its first steps were unheralded. Fortunately, its initiatives came to be well accepted by the public and then embraced by such governmental entities as the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and the Museum of New Mexico—a fact that augers well for the continued success of this enterprise.

Volume I, and now Volume II, of the New Mexico Bureau of Land Management's Cultural Resource Publication Series have brought to light much original research on the history of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Surely, more will be added in the future as documents in the archives of Mexico and Spain are uncovered and provide what is bound to be a rich treasure of detail. Additionally, photographers, illustrators, and travelers—past and present—will allow us to see the landscape through their eyes, while the tangible physical aspects of the trail will continue to secure the attention of archaeologists. So, in time, an increasing body of knowledge of the Camino Real may take its legitimate place in the annals of research. However, while information is of inestimable value, so is evaluation.

To measure, to weigh, to give value to, to provide meaning—this work will view the history of the Camino Real from a more profound point of view, uncover and explore its broad universal themes and, in the process, also show us something about ourselves. How did the coming of the Spaniards change the economy and the culture of the Southwest? How was our country changed? What do the overlapping histories of the Camino Real and the Santa Fe Trail say about the confrontation of individuality and community? In a country such as the United States, now being challenged with increasing boldness by ethnic diversity, what does the Spanish presence in the Southwest, decades before the coming of the English to the Eastern seaboard, represent? And more important, how can we learn to judge the past fairly, generously, judiciously? What does it say about our own prejudices if we fail to do so? For the challenge is this: if we do not pay honest tribute to the past, how can we recognize its rich contributions to the present? Only a journey of imagination and honor is worthy of the name.

—*Gabrielle G. Palmer*

What is the Significance of a Road?

Cultural Change and Cultural Exchange along El Camino Real

Frances Levine



EL CAMINO REAL is often described as an “artery” or lifeline linking the colonists of colonial New Mexico with their New World motherland. Colonists and goods passing along the royal road sustained the fledgling colony. To see the Camino Real simply as a transportation corridor or commercial venture, however, is to miss a great part of the significance of a road, which carries not only goods and people, but new ideas and ideologies and other intangibles.

Roads and trails are important concepts in Spanish colonial historiography and the scholarship of the North American West (Earle 1991; Hassig 1991; Palmer 1993; Riley 1987; Simmons 1983). Roads connect frontiers, those forward waves of settlement that link different regions and different cultures. David Weber’s (1992) study, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, offers a definition of frontiers that draws from anthropological and historical characterizations of frontier social dimensions. Weber (1992:11) describes a frontier as

[a zone] of interaction between two different cultures—as places where the cultures of the invader and of the invaded contend with one another and with their physical environment to produce a dynamic that is unique to time and place.

Frontiers then are dynamic social situations in which cultures change in a variety of ways. Cultures can change through directed programs by which dominant cultures purposefully set out to convert or proselytize subject peoples. Cultures may change by the selective borrowing of material items or concepts from another culture. People may select one aspect of a foreign culture, yet reject other goods or ideas. Cultures can also change through processes of adaptation and evolution that foster the adoption of more efficient or effective behaviors. Spontaneous innovations are another means by which cultures change. In culture-contact situations, there may be a range of responses that lead to changes in the culture of the host, as well as the culture of the conqueror. Roads, such as El Camino Real, serve as the channels by which cultures transmit new possibilities to one another.

El Camino Real linked the far northern frontier of New Spain with the Pueblo heartland on the Río Grande. At its southern terminus lay Mexico City, the administrative headquarters of the viceroyalty of New Spain. From Mexico City the road advanced northward with the slow progression

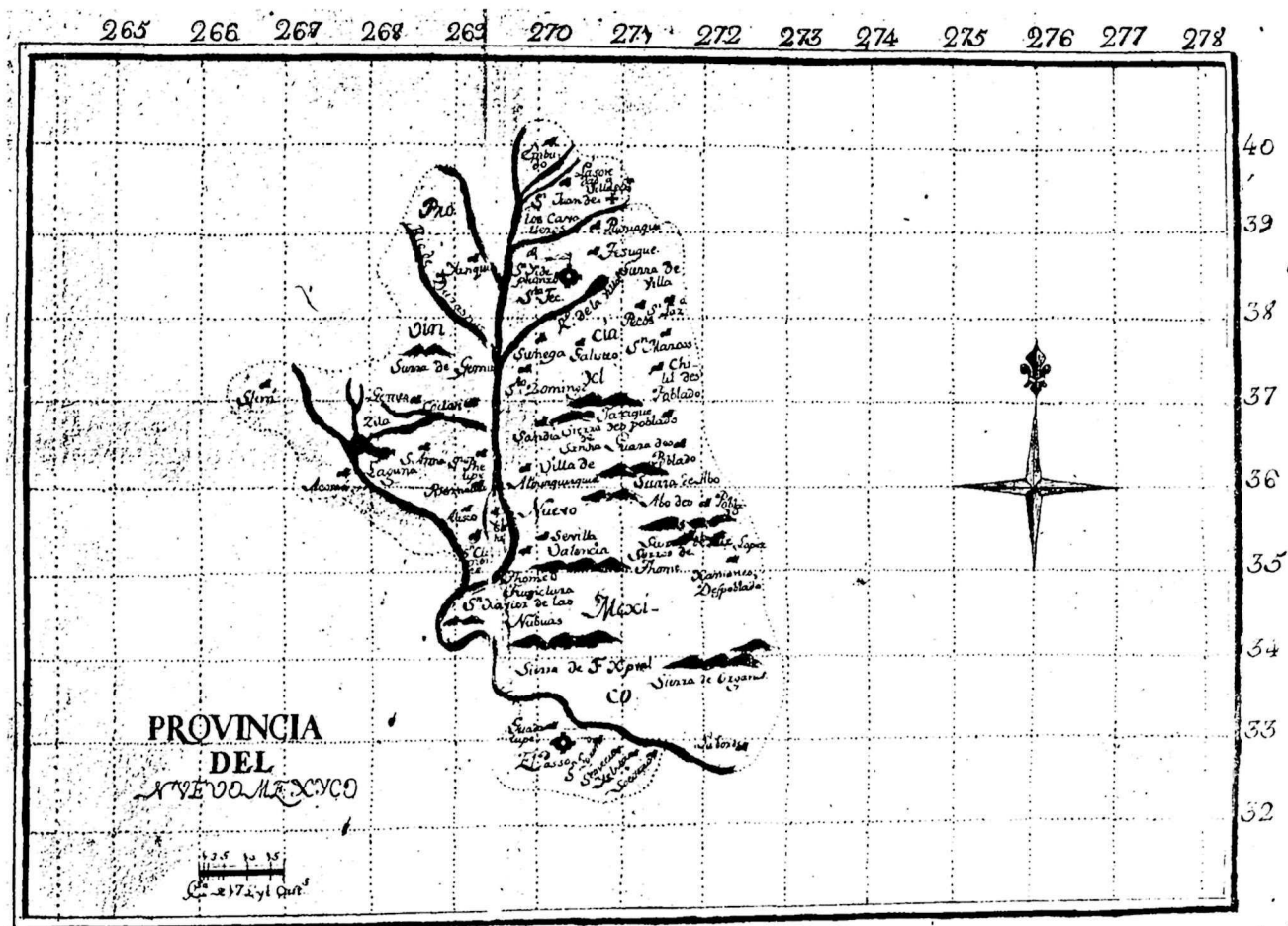


Fig. 1.1
Map Provincia del
Nuevo Mexico.
Courtesy Library
of Congress.

of Spanish settlement from the Valley of Mexico to the mining settlements of Durango and Chihuahua. As the settlements expanded northward along El Camino Real, so too did Spanish administrative and Catholic religious institutions. In the north, some 1,800 miles from Mexico City and 1,200 miles north of the mining settlements on the Chihuahuan frontier, lay the Pueblo world.

The Río Grande had become the focal point for Pueblo settlement during the late fourteenth century. By 1598, when Juan de Oñate extended the Camino Real to the far northern Spanish frontier at San Juan Pueblo, the Pueblo world had already been shaken by contacts with previous Spanish explorers. At the time of initial Spanish contact in 1540, the Pueblo population of the Río Grande has been estimated at between 40,000 and 60,000 inhabitants, living in some 50 to 75 pueblos ranging in size from 300 to 3,000 rooms (Riley 1982:117; Schroeder 1979:254). Pueblo culture had evolved over many centuries to include an economy based on farming and inter-regional trade, and a theocratic form of governance.¹ In contact with the New World Spaniards, Pueblo culture would undergo additional changes.

First contact between Pueblos and the Spaniards occurred during the period of exploratory *entradas* between 1539 and 1591. Although contacts between the Pueblos and the Spanish explorers were not sustained throughout this period, the overall effects were often disastrous for the Pueblos. Oñate's colonization of New Mexico in 1598 initiated a period of aggressive religious conversion and economic exploitation. For the first three-quarters of the seventeenth century, until the revolt of 1680, the Pueblos were the objects of the fervent religious conversion programs of the Hapsburg monarchy

(Kessell 1989:134).

Following the Spanish Reconquest of New Mexico in 1696, a period of relative tolerance developed in Pueblo-Hispano relations. In part, Kessell explains the accommodations that Governor Diego de Vargas made to the Pueblos as a part of the secularization of the Spanish monarchy under the Bourbons (Kessell 1989:134). The eighteenth century saw more parity in social and legal relationships between Pueblos and Hispanos. Accommodation and selective borrowing characterized this third phase of cultural contact and cultural exchange between the Pueblos and Hispanic settlers throughout the remaining years of Spanish rule.

Changes to the physical environment, the organization, and the cultural dynamics of the former Pueblo world wrought by El Camino Real are examined below.

CULTURAL CONTACTS

Even before the Camino Real was extended into the Pueblo settlements of the Río Grande, the Pueblo world had been transformed by European contact. Introduced diseases, warfare, and the depletion of native food stores are some of the factors that contributed to the population decline that lasted throughout the Spanish colonial period (Creamer 1994; Levine and LaBauve 1997; Lycett 1989). Population decline in turn disrupted centuries-old social and economic networks among the Río Grande pueblos. There are no accurate population counts for the pueblos at the time of establishment of Oñate's colony on the Río Grande. The Pueblo population has been reported to have been between 16,000 and 80,000 (Gutiérrez 1991:92; Schroeder 1979:254). By 1706, the Pueblo population of the Río Grande and its tributaries was reduced to some 6,440 people in 18 villages (Hackett 1937[3]:373–377; Schroeder 1979:254).

With the establishment of the Oñate colony, the Río Grande Pueblos experienced more sustained contact and more aggressive programs of directed cultural change. Missions were a settlement type that the Spanish used throughout the New World to enculturate native populations. The goals of missionaries went well beyond the teachings of Christianity. Natives would be taught to live like Europeans, to eat like Europeans, and embrace European ideals (Weber 1992:106).

The establishment and growth of missions throughout the seventeenth century had a profound impact on Pueblo community structure and economies. Colonial rule encouraged the reduction of dispersed pueblo villages into mission centers. In seventeenth-century New Mexico, Pueblo villages also seem to have coalesced even without the encouragement of the church (Schroeder 1979). Scholes (1936:21) believes that where missions were built, or where Pueblo populations were induced to settle in fewer, larger villages, there were immediate impacts on the environment and on the Pueblo communities. Scholes suggests that there was often a reduction in population at mission centers. Although Scholes does not speculate about the causes, he may be suggesting that disease was a factor when the Pueblos were congregated around mission centers. European-introduced diseases ravaged the Pueblos in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Lycett 1989), perhaps encouraging some pueblos to merge for mutual defensive, economic, or ritual benefit. Throughout the seventeenth century the Spanish would also encourage Pueblos to congregate around mission centers.

Population reduction, new crops, and new farming techniques caused changes in land use and agricultural practices. Pueblo members were impressed into new economic positions associated with the maintenance of mission herds and tasks associated with the maintenance of the *convento* (Scholes 1936:313). No doubt this removed workers from more traditional Pueblo economic roles, such as harvesting raw materials and natural resources from a traditionally larger resource catchment area. The effects on traditional Pueblo society must have been devastating as critical members of the community were lost through death, disease, and conversion. Scholes considered the reduction of the

Pueblo population largely in colonial economic terms. He saw it as a basis of diminishing returns for the *encomenderos* (individuals permitted to collect tribute from the Pueblo villages), worsening conflicts between church and state.

In addition to churches and living spaces, mission complexes contained farms, orchards, and grazing lands. These features are not well recorded in New Mexico archaeological and historical literature, but they would have required a shift in land uses from native practice. The foods, medicines, and materials that the colonists carried with them were the seeds of their new life in New Mexico, a life that would also change the economy of the New Mexico Pueblos.

In discussing the effects of European and Mexican cultigens on the diet and economy of the Pueblos following the establishment of the capital at San Gabriel, Ford (1987:73) emphasizes the differences between Pueblo land use and the land use practices of the Hispanic miners, farmers, and pastoralists. The colonists who accompanied Oñate brought new strains of corn as well as wheat, lentil, and barley that were dependant on irrigation. There is debate among archaeologists about the scale of precontact ditch irrigation. Maxwell and Anscheutz (1992) discuss the diversity of agricultural strategies evident in the archaeological record of the northern Río Grande. They note that Spanish chronicles suggest that canal irrigation in the area may have been limited. Oñate began construction of an irrigation ditch at San Juan within days of his arrival in New Mexico, once again supporting the idea that ditches may not have been central to precontact agricultural systems in that area.

Later reports on the establishment of the colony included an account of the crops introduced among the Pueblos. The crops included lettuce, cabbage, peas, chickpeas, cumin seed, carrots, turnips, garlic, onions, artichokes, radishes, and cucumbers (Ford 1987:76). Along with these new food crops, the tools carried by the colonists signaled a change in land use technology (Ford 1987:76). Metal axes, hoes, and draft animals would have had an immediate impact by allowing more intensive land use and wood harvesting strategies, which would in turn have had an immediate impact on the ecology of the Upper Río Grande (Ford 1987:84–86).

The physical environment of the Río Grande pueblos was changed by herd animals, new crops, and metal tools brought by the seventeenth-century missions and civil settlements. With these innovative additions to native technologies, there was likely a change in the agricultural cycle scheduling and responsibilities of Pueblo officials. Ortiz (1969:174–177) discusses the impact of wheat, a crop introduced by Spanish. While planting and harvesting of most crops within the Tewa pueblos are regulated by the ritually prominent “Made People,” wheat is a crop whose propagation and harvest is governed by the secular or Spanish officials.²

The mission itself was intended as the institution for teaching Christian doctrine and for providing Pueblo people with the conceptual tools for enculturation into the Spanish world. To be Christian was the first stage. Gutiérrez (1991:46–94) finds many parallels between Christianity and Pueblo theology that may have allowed Christian symbols and rituals to be incorporated into Pueblo ritual. Both / Roman Catholicism and traditional Pueblo religion are theocracies incorporating cyclical time, sacred space, and ritual performance.

One of the most significant changes in Pueblo culture may have been the change in the concept of time. Seasonal time in the mission-based villages would now be marked not only by seasonal changes in foliage and weather, but also by the Catholic ritual calendar and the observance of saints’ days. The Pueblos would add the heroic saints of the Catholic world to the deities of the natural world. Each pueblo received the name of this holy spirit, adding a special feast day to the annual cycle of community life. Daily time would come to be marked by the tolling of church bells and the schedule of masses.

The celebration of the Christian mass and the performance of Pueblo rituals both embody culturally relative ideals about time, space, and human relationships (Gutiérrez 1991:61–63). Scholes (1936) focused largely on the imposition of Christianity on the Pueblos in the seventeenth century. Gutiérrez (1991:63–64) speculates that while some priests may have usurped the powers and prerogatives of Pueblo religious leaders, other Pueblo religious leaders may have allied themselves with the priests. By the eighteenth century, clearly some accords were reached between the ideals of Christian doctrine and the parallel rituals of Pueblo religions.

The needs and maintenance cycles of domestic crops and animals added another dimension to the rhythms of native seasonal rounds. The horse itself might have also been a part of the changing concept of time. The Pueblos likely were changed by the speed with which distances could be traveled on horseback, and the goods that could be carried with oxen and mules. Raid and trade were surely revolutionized by the horse.

There is a persistent myth in New Mexico that Pueblo “culture” was largely unchanged by Spanish contact. Simmons (1977:12), for example, concludes that “at the end of the colonial period, Pueblo Indians still possessed their ancestral lands, and their native culture survived almost intact.” Simmons seems to draw this conclusion because many Pueblos retained portions of their aboriginal lands, and because of the persistence of Pueblo languages and ritual practices.³ However, it no longer seems reasonable to suggest that the population losses of the contact period, the assimilation objectives of Spanish missions, and the innovations selectively borrowed did not have a lasting affect on the New Mexico Pueblos.

The loss of trade partners, the loss of men and women to fill ritual positions, and the incorporation of a Christian calendar into the Pueblo ritual cycle were changes that likely had far-reaching impacts on Pueblo culture (Levine and LaBauve 1997; Ortiz 1969). The incorporation of domesticated foods and animals and the interactions between colonists and Pueblos could not have left Pueblo culture unmarked. Pueblo culture cannot be said to have remained unchanged throughout the colonial period. It might be more accurate to suggest that it *endured* through the selective borrowing and incorporation of the direct and indirect effects of contact, colonization, and the asserted processes of assimilation.

TRANSPORTING CULTURE

At the southern end of El Camino Real, near *el paso del norte*, on April 30, 1598, “the day of the ascension of our lord,” Oñate performed the ritual act of possession claiming New Mexico in the name of the king of Spain (Hammond and Rey 1953:314). Here was a dramatic event—the claiming of a new royal possession and the forging of the road northward, establishing a link between two worlds. Along this road two different cultures would meet to produce something unknown before—New Mexico, which was not another Mexico or another Spain, but a new entity that would produce its own distinctive regional culture from the rich blending of Pueblo, Spanish, and Mexican traditions.

A road was not a necessity until New Mexico was claimed officially. Then a regular transportation route became not only desirable but essential to link the frontiers of the growing nation. The very name *El Camino Real*, the Royal Road, reminds us that roads are the enterprises of governments. It is not often that individuals have the resources to explore, build, and maintain a road the length of El Camino. The road then is also a symbol that the Spanish Crown planned to make a commitment to New Mexico, that they had an abiding interest in establishing New Mexico as a part of their vast empire.

The remains of the road are physical artifacts attesting to the strategic concerns that occupied the settlers, soldiers, and friars who moved the colony further and further north. The landscape over which El Camino Real passes is a powerful reminder of the historical forces that brought about the



Fig. 1.2

Three textiles demonstrate the stylistic link between embroideries in Spain, Mexico, and New Mexico. Top, wool-on-cotton colcha, mid-19th century New Mexico (Accession#L.5.57-36). Center, wool-on-cotton embroidery, mid-19th century Mexico (Accession#L.5.80-1). Bottom, wool-on-wool embroidery, late 18th century Spain (Accession#L.5.81-3). Photos Jack Parsons. Spanish Colonial Arts Society Collection. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.

settlement of New Mexico (Roney 1993:85; Scurlock 1993). The chronicle of the Oñate expedition is brief, almost disquieting, for a journey of nearly six months. The journal takes up a mere twenty pages in the translated text by Hammond and Rey (1953:309–329). Although the description is terse, it tells enough to let us understand the hardships of the trail. The chronicle tells of dwindling food supplies, shifting sand dunes, and insufficient numbers of oxen to take the laden carts through the rough passages. A number of people are reported lost. Some of them, like Juan del Caso, and a woman identified as Elena and her husband, make their way back to the main party. Others, like the blacks Luis and Manuel, perish on the road (Hammond and Rey 1953:317–318). In all, six people died en route—a child known in the documents as the son of Herrera, a servant killed by a colt, an Apache boy, the eldest member of the expedition, Pedro Robledo, and the two blacks Luis and Manuel (Hammond and Rey 1953:310, 314, 316).

Of the 83 laden carts that began the journey, only 61 arrived in New Mexico. The other 21, fully one-fourth, were abandoned along the way, their loads redistributed to cut down on the number of carts (Hammond and Rey 1953:320). Even after the rigors of the Jornada del Muerto, the chronicle is terse: “We were exploring and feeling our way along the entire route for the first time, and we suffered a great deal because of not knowing it” (Hammond and Rey 1953:317).

The inspection reports of the Oñate expedition make it clear that many of the colonists he brought envisioned a life of luxury (Hammond and Rey 1953; Snow 1993). In time the Camino Real brought more and more of the practical goods needed to sustain the colony. Imports to the colony always seemed to have outweighed the exports from New Mexico. The mission trade brought not only the tools, livestock, and equipment to build and sustain the mission complexes, but also the religious paraphernalia that the friars needed to create the ritual settings for imparting Christianity to the Pueblos (Ivey 1993).

Spanish culture was changed as well through centuries of contact with the Río Grande Pueblos. Archaeological excavations in seventeenth-century sites indicate the extent to which the colonists were dependant on Pueblo potters for ceramic housewares. In the ceramic assemblages of colonial sites we see a clear example of cultural exchange, the Pueblo supplying the technology but producing pottery forms suited for Spanish aesthetics and cultural practices (Wiseman 1988). There may have been other arenas in which the Spanish colonists were the recipients of Pueblo knowledge of the Río Grande, but few are recorded in the literature, written as it was from the perspective of the dominant culture.

With culture contact there was also cultural blending, both of material goods and of genetic traits. Much of the scholarship pertaining to seventeenth-century New Mexico avoids the topic of *mestizaje*. Gutiérrez (1991:194) apparently believes that in the earliest years of contact religion and status differentiated Spanish Catholics from “pagan” Indians. Through time, and with the genetic and cultural mixing of *mestizaje*, the Spanish evolved an elaborate classification of racial mixture based on skin color, cultural differences, and the ascribed status of family ancestry. These terms became a caste (*casta*) system (Bustamante 1991). *Español*, or Spanish identity, was further separated into those of Spanish peninsular birth and those of New World birth (*criollo*). Those with Indian ancestry were *mestizos*. The racial admixture of blacks and Indians was also included in the *casta* identifications.

In New Mexico documents of the period 1623 to 1823, Bustamante found more than twenty terms used to denote race. In many cases, however, a person’s ethnic identification was determined by a number of factors, including the community in which he or she was raised and whether the child’s paternity was known or, perhaps more important, whether it was openly acknowledged. Ethnic identity is self-ascriptive and mutable, so the same person might be referred to throughout life by a number of different terms (Bustamante 1991). By 1790, the year of the first comprehensive civil census, little more than half of New Mexico residents claimed to be *españoles*. Tjarks (1978:78–80) and Bustamante (1991:152) note that this term likely was used to denote social status and may not be a true indicator of genetic makeup. By then, New Mexico communities included children and grandchildren of mixed Spanish, Mexican, and Indian ancestry.

The designations of the *casta* system are a recognition that where cultures meet, they produce a new social order. That roads connect people as certainly as they link places. That roads are an important component of frontier dynamics, and that roads establish new economic and social alliances.

TRADE ON EL CAMINO REAL

Oñate’s caravan came prepared to trade with the inhabitants of the Río Grande. They brought a supply of items for barter that bear a close resemblance to the mythical payment made for Manhattan Island. Below is a rough functional breakdown of the items. Items of personal adornment and tools comprised the bulk of the trade goods, but religious items and toys for children were also included in the lot. The total value of all items was listed as 355 pesos and 7½ *tomines*, still short of the 500 pesos of trade goods specified in Oñate’s contract. That the Pueblos received these goods is attested by archaeological excavations in New Mexico pueblo and mission sites, where examples of the awls, knives, thimbles, hawk bells, glass beads, crosses, and religious medals have been found (Kidder 1932:306–308, 1958:304–305; Toulouse 1949; Vivian 1964). The excavation techniques available to these early archaeological studies of colonial



Fig. 1.3

Olive jars used to ship and store foodstuffs. From top, early 19th century Mexico, collected in New Mexico (Accession#L.5.54-51); 19th century Mexico (Accession#L.5.55-71); 18th century Spain (Accession#L.5.62-39); 19th century Mexico (Accession#L.5.55-70). Photos Jack Parsons. Spanish Colonial Arts Society Collection. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.

missions were not sensitive to the context in which the trade goods were found. It is not possible, then, to know or to speculate about the cultural contexts into which the Pueblos received the trade goods.⁴

Trade Goods Listed in the Salazar Inspection Report of 1597 (from Hammond and Rey 1953:220–222)

Beads and Items of Personal Adornment

Three bunches of assorted colored
glass beads, each bunch containing
10,000 beads
Nine hundred aquamarine glass beads
Four thousand five hundred small glass
beads called half aquamarines
Seven small bunches of little white beads
called Indian barley
Forty-six bunches of small glass beads,
each with 1,000 beads
Twenty-five ordinary combs
Nineteen small Flemish mirrors
Eighty-two and one-half dozen pairs
glass earrings
Six small gourd-shaped earrings of
colored glass
Six dozen jet rings
Nineteen and one-half dozen hawk bells
Twenty-five alloy rings
Twenty-two finger rings of bone
Sixty-three necklaces of glass beads
of varying values
Forty-four throat bands of glass beads
Some beads of an alloy for throat bands
Four and one-half dozen amulets
of badger bone
Ten to twelve small glass buttons
One jet headpiece
Nine small hats, very poorly dyed,
seven without lining or fringe trimming

Musical Instruments

Eight pairs of whistles of Texcoco clay
Six small flutes for children
One lot Paris trumpets for children

Religious Items

Six hundred eighty medals of an alloy
Some wooden beads painted like coral
for seven rosaries
Thirty-one rosaries of glass beads
Twenty-three other rosaries of quality
similar to above
Fifty-six Tlascala tassels for rosaries
Thirty-one tin images resembling
an Agnus Dei
Sixteen tin medals
Some small tinsel pictures

Tools and Materials

Nine lots Bohemian knives,
each lot containing 18 knives
Eighteen lots butcher knives,
each lot containing 10 knives
Eighty-nine ordinary scissors
Seven thousand two hundred and fifty
shoemaker's needles
Twenty thimbles
Six awls
1 lb. 6 oz. Castilian blue and white thread
7 oz. coarse Portuguese thread
5 oz. fine yarn

The goods that New Mexico contributed to the trade were the *productos de la tierra* and *efectos del país*, the resources of the land and the manufactured goods of the province. Salt, piñon, hides, furs, and textiles, some obtained in trade between the Plains groups and the Pueblos, found an important place in the exports of the colony.

Surviving trade invoices for the Spanish and Mexican periods give some impression of the importance of hides in the exports to Mexico. The mission supply train of 1639 carried 122 painted buffalo hides, 198 chamois skins (*gamuzas*), and an unknown number of finished leather jackets, shirts, and breeches (Bloom 1935). Governor Mendizábal exported 1,300 deerskins and some buffalo

hides to Parral in 1660 (Weber 1971:20). During the *residencia* of Mendizábal in 1664, his possessions included 1,200 antelope skins, and four bundles of elk hides (Weber 1971:20–21). After the Reconquest of New Mexico in 1696, Governor Vargas sought to reestablish the hide trade with the Apache and received gifts of buffalo skins and an elk-hide tent during the negotiations (Weber 1971:22).

During the eighteenth century, through the trade in hides, Comanches, Apaches, and other Plains peoples became participants in a world trade network (Levine 1991). The commercial value of hides in Mexican markets played a major role in sustaining the Plains–New Mexican trade for centuries. The economic place afforded Plains Indians through the trade is one of the many intangible consequences of El Camino Real.

Among the many unintentional exchanges occasioned by El Camino Real was that the road served also as a corridor for the passage of disease. Waves of smallpox, measles, cholera, and other respiratory and viral afflictions followed the expansion of the road northward (Prewn 1992; Reff 1993). During the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the Jesuit missionaries of northern Mexico reported periodic epidemics. Reff (1993:167) reports that epidemics in 1623–1625 may well have spread to New Mexico through the annual caravan that left Zacatecas in 1625. The contract includes a large sum for medicines and drugs, and 4 dozen hens were transported for those who might be sick on the way.

It is not likely that a person exhibiting the manifestations of an active disease would have been permitted to accompany any expedition, but chronic infectious diseases such as typhoid, malaria, and typhus, and associated maladies such as dysentery, may have been brought unintentionally. In addition, the spore that causes smallpox can remain dormant, but lethal, in textiles, clothing, and possessions that might have been in contact with an infected individual (Ramenofsky 1987:146–147; Reff 1993:99–100).⁵ Contaminated water sources along the trail might be responsible for the spread of dysentery and typhoid. Often, it is not a single disease that affects populations under stress, but a complex of factors. Both the colonists and the Pueblos fit the profile of susceptible populations.

New Mexico experienced at least twenty epidemics evident in sacramental records between 1636 and 1816, and as many as nineteen periods of epidemics are documented in northern Mexico in the period 1520 to the 1660s (Stodder and Martin 1992:65–67). *Hechiceros* or native priests in northern Mexico blamed missionaries and priests as the sources of the diseases, and often seemed to have used epidemics as a time for the revitalization of native beliefs (Reff 1993:148, 154). In seventeenth-century New Mexico, similar reports are referenced in the literature (Gutiérrez 1991:113–114; Hackett 1937[3]:106–114), while the Spanish viewed disease as a divine punishment or celestial phenomenon (Reff 1993:97). By the opening of the nineteenth century, El Camino Real would also carry the cure for smallpox.

Live smallpox vaccine became available in New Mexico by August 1804 (Spanish Archives of New Mexico, series II, reel 15, frame 313; Bloom 1924). Surgeon Larranga inoculated children with live cowpox, from which the fluid was then “transfused” into the arm of an uninfected person.⁶ The children were transported up the Camino Real from Chihuahua to the settlements at Valverde, Sevillaeta, and Sabinal (Bloom 1924:5). The vaccination was ordered to be administered throughout the province, and this technique appears to have continued to be used, albeit sporadically, in New Mexico well into the nineteenth century.

Roads have a role in cultural change and cultural exchange that transcends their mere physical presence. For historians and anthropologists, roads are a symbol of the powerful dynamics of frontiers.

ROADS WITH “IT”

In modern life, roads continue to play a part in inter-regional trade, and in our sense of adventure. Superhighways are another species of road illustrating the powers and resources available to states. But I-25, I-40, and I-10, the major arteries linking New Mexico with the Greater Southwest, don't have *it*, except in the short stretches that parallel ancient and historic trails. *It* is the power to allure, to captivate, even to frighten; *it* is the challenge of moving people through, not over and above, the dramatic landscape that is the Southwest.

It can still be found in this country on roads like the “Blue Highways” or secondary roads that took William Least Heat Moon (1982) on an odyssey connecting him to the local traditions of the United States, where he found himself in a journey of discovery. It is still possible in New Mexico to travel along roads that connect with the land and its people. The “High Road to Taos” takes us to communities that still share a bond with the earliest settlements of New Spain—where the houses, the fields, the churches, the *acequias*, and the dirt roads sustain and are sustained by a way of life that values the land, but does not dominate. Highway 117 takes us through the burned and pocked landscape of the Malpaís lava flow, representing the mythical blood that flowed from the giant slain by the legendary Navajo twins near Mount Taylor.

Some adventurers have tried to recapture the drama of following ancient and historic roads and trails throughout the Southwest. The Chaco Roads allow us to see that the Chaco phenomenon was not localized in one isolated canyon, but was more powerful, perhaps a true state whose influence spread far and wide, if only for a short time.

Douglas Preston and Walter Nelson followed Coronado's route (Preston 1992) on a journey that connected them vividly with the rigors of the trail. Preston and Nelson were faced by problems different than what Coronado faced—or were they? Coronado faced hostile natives when he tried to enter Zuni on horseback; Preston and Nelson faced hostile natives in towns and cities throughout southern Arizona and New Mexico. Zunis reacted to the strange bearded men riding beasts; modern Arizonans and New Mexicans reacted to the sight and smell of these modern men of Cibola. Broken tack, lost horses, saddle sores on man and beast, bad water, blazing sun, caustic wind, blinding sand, the deep mud did not elude either party. Neither did the breathtaking vistas and the magical light on a landscape unsurpassed for its splendor and drama. Preston and Nelson experienced some contemporary challenges that Coronado could never have imagined: barbed wire, salt cedar-choked river valleys, cars, real estate “barons,” and other hostiles.

Those who have walked *El Camino Real*, whether in person or in books and pictures, know that this roadway too still has *it*—the power to connect us to a timeless place of profound splendor. ♣

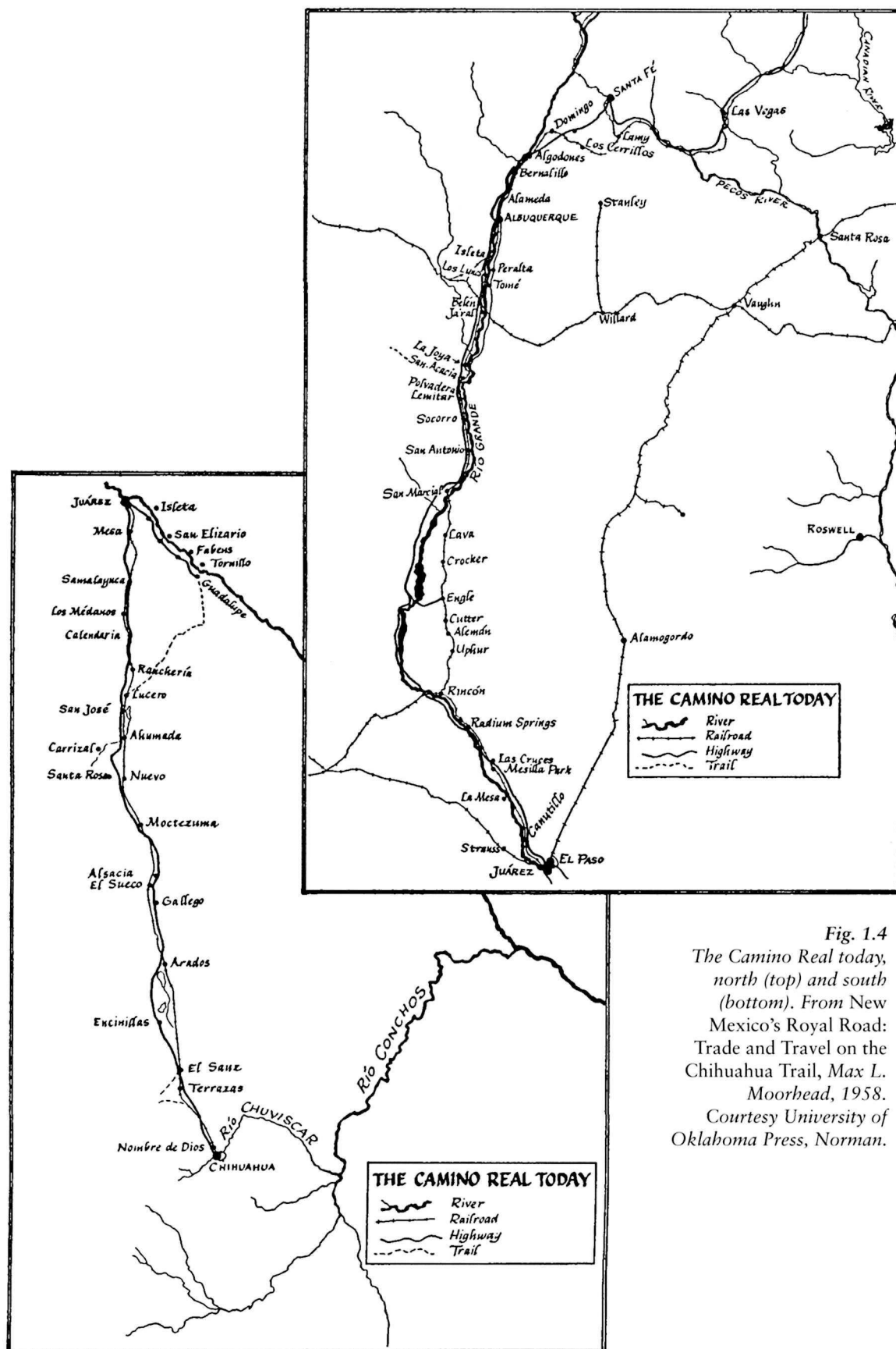


Fig. 1.4
The Camino Real today,
north (top) and south
(bottom). From New
Mexico's Royal Road:
Trade and Travel on the
Chihuahua Trail, Max L.
Moorhead, 1958.
Courtesy University of
Oklahoma Press, Norman.

NOTES

1. The earliest Spanish accounts note the importance of inter-regional trade in salt, meat, tallow, hides, turquoise, and other items (Levine 1991:156).
2. The Spanish introduced a group of secular governing officials in the Pueblos during the colonial period. These officials consist of the Governor, Lt. Governor, Fiscales, War Captain or War Chief, and others (Sando 1992; Simmons 1979:183). These offices are still held in all of the Rio Grande pueblos, and serve as the contacts with the non-Indian world. The secular officials are sometimes referred to as the "Spanish officers." A set of religious officials takes responsibility for the ritual cycle observed by each of the pueblos.
3. In a later writing, Simmons (1979:181) clearly recognizes that the suppression of native religious practices "disrupted the entire web of Pueblo life."
4. Gutiérrez (1991:52) briefly explores the different cultural contexts of Spanish and Pueblo gift giving. He points out that what the Pueblos gave as gifts, based on the idea that they were establishing diplomatic relations or alliances, the Spanish interpreted as surrendered tribute.
5. Smallpox is among those viral infections (*variola major*) transmitted directly through inhalation. Smallpox enters the body through the upper respiratory tract, and can be transmitted for a period up to about two weeks (Ramenofsky 1987:146–147). The dried pustules can remain viable for a few years, and can be transmitted through contaminated textiles, foods, and other possessions of an infected individual (Ramenofsky 1987:148; Reff 1993:101). Reff (1993:102) believes that in a number of episodes in northern New Spain smallpox was transmitted along the royal roads through the transport of cotton and cotton goods. Presumably, the immunological pattern of smallpox accounts for Stodder and Martin's (1992) suggestion that smallpox was historically endemic in the southwestern Pueblos.
6. The method invented in 1799 by Dr. Edward Jenner in England.

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Journal of a Reconnaissance of the Camino Real

Michael P. Marshall



THIS CHAPTER DOCUMENTS AN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE the Camino Real trail and related parajes in northern Chihuahua. A reconnaissance of the Camino Real from El Paso del Norte to Ciudad Chihuahua was conducted by the author and John Roney, BLM Albuquerque District archaeologist, in October 1988 with the purpose of gathering information pertinent to the development of the Camino Real Research Project. Information regarding the regional geography and the location and character of the related parajes is provided in this text.

Historical documents and maps were employed in conjunction with Mexican topographic maps to locate the trail and related sites. Emphasis was given to the location of specific parajes and landmarks along the trail. Notwithstanding the extent of the study area, the reconnaissance was quite productive. Review of the historic documents on site and the inspection of the landforms allowed us using the topographic maps to locate the general route of the trail and many of the related parajes. Search and find actions in specific locations and discussions with local residents often resulted in the exact location of the trail and parajes. We were able to map the general location of the trail from El Paso to Laguna Encinillas and the Contarecio branch from Ojo Lucero north to Guadalupe. The following parajes were visited: Ojo Samalayuca, El Bordo, Ojo Lucero, Ojo de la Pato, the ruins of Presidio Carrizal, Ojo Caliente, Ojo Gallego, Ojo Gallegito, and El Peñol. The locations of Charcos de Grado and Tinajas de Contarecio on the northeast branch were also defined. In various areas we were able to define the trail as it passed the parajes, and from adjacent elevations were able to see the trail extend into the distance.

We were most impressed by the vast distances of the trail's passage over the arid landscape and the considerable distance between water sources and parajes. Indeed, the Jornada del Contarecio and Jornada de Gallego are comparable to the Jornada del Muerto. More than two hundred photographs were taken and the various parajes were described. The general location of the trail was marked and the specific locations of various parajes were plotted on topographic maps.

This preliminary archaeological reconnaissance of the Chihuahua section of the Camino Real together with our previous knowledge of the New Mexico section now allows us to plot the general route of the trail and to locate various parajes along the avenue. This information is useful for the joint



Fig. 2.1
Chihuahua, Mexico 1882. Photo
John Hillers. National Archives.

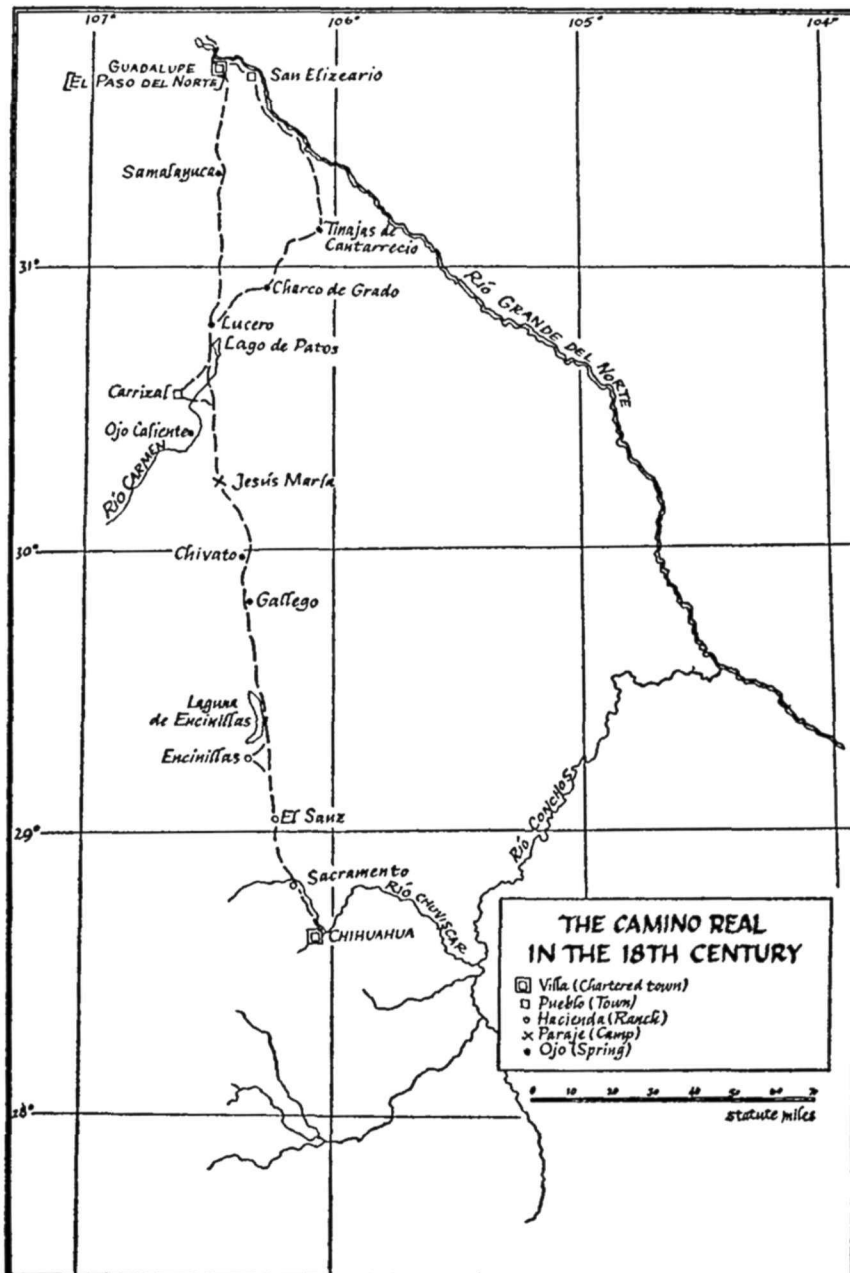


Fig. 2.2
The Camino Real in the 18th
century (southern portion).
Courtesy University of
Oklahoma Press, Norman.

New Mexican–Chihuahua Highway Marker Project and as a basis for continued research.

This chapter contains a journal of the Chihuahua reconnaissance as well as a collection of historic references to the various parajes and jornadas of the Chihuahua route. The place names are ordered from north to south (El Paso to Ciudad Chihuahua) and include the northeast branch of the Jornada del Contarecio from Ojo Lucero to the San Elizario area.

THE SAMALAYUCA DISTRICT

October 3, 1888. Over the Río Bravo and into Ciudad Juárez. Passing the border without event and into the teeming city for additional provisions, *cerveza mexicana*. We proceeded south with haste to the Sierra Presidio. We ascended the northwest spine of the sierra following a curious limestone “cobble” roadway to the Presidio Microundas for a view of the region and our first lesson in the regional geography. From this elevated position near the northwestern terminus of the Sierra Presidio an extended view can be made north across the open plano toward El Paso and south across the Samalayuca dune field.

Travelled this morning but eight miles, and halted, with good grass and rain-water. Ahead of us were the much-dreaded sand hills, (*los médanos*,) an immense field of steep sand ridges, without shrub or vegetation of any kind, looking like a piece of Arabian desert transplanted into this plain, or like the bottom of the sea uplifted from the deep. Several springs, I am told, are found near the sand hills; and it is not at all unlikely that this whole ground was once covered by a lake. One spring in particular, forming a water-hole at the foot of the sand hills, and called *ojo de malayuque*, is known as a usual camping place on our road, but we stopped before reaching it. Though we shall pass but the lowest depression of the hills, near their western limit, it will nevertheless be a hard day’s work, and we prepared our animals for it by a long rest.

[Passage into the dunes was made at nightfall.] In the meanwhile dark night had come on, illuminated only by lightning, that showed us for awhile the most appalling night-scene—our wagons moving along as slow and solemn as a funeral procession; ghastly riders on horseback, wrapped in blankets or cloaks; some tired travellers stretched out on the sand, others walking ahead, and tracing the road with the fire of their cigarritos; and the deepest silence interrupted only by the yelling exclamations of the drivers, and the rolling of distant thunder. The scene was impressive enough to be remembered by me; but I made a vow the same night, that whenever I should undertake this trip again, I would rather go three days around, than travel once more over the sand hills with a wagon. About midnight, at last we reached the southern end of the sand hills, and encamped without water (Wislizenus [1848] 1969:43).

There are two major geographic barriers in this northern Chihuahuan sector of the Camino Real: the Sierra Presidio and the Samalayuca dunes. The Sierra Presidio form a wall of upturned limestone, trending northwest-southeast, and extend for 75 kilometers across this section of northeastern Chihuahua. This range allows passage northeast to the Rio Grande Valley in only the Puerto Presidio and the Puerto Ancho or La Ventana areas or north around the northwestern end of the range. The Samalayuca dunes envelop the entire northern plano, presenting a formidable barrier to the passage of wagons.

El día nueve al rumbo del Noreste, caminé seis leguas, por médanos de arena, que con dificultad se pudieron transitar, particularmente las dos leguas de ellos, últimas, por ser tan encumbrados que exceden a cuantos se han visto en las playas del mar.

Corre la cordillera de estos médanos Nordeste y Sudeste, deduciendo su origen por la parte del Norte, desde la tierra de los apaches de Xila y terminándose cerca de la junta de los ríos del Norte y Conchos; parando éste, en aguaje despoblado que llaman el Ojito.

El día 10 al rumbo del Norte, caminé diez leguas, por tierra llana y molesta por la mucha arena que se encuentra, con pequeño monte de matorrales; haciendo noche en un despoblado que llaman la Cañada, mirándose a la parte del Oeste de él, una sierra que llaman del Paso (Pedro de Rivera 1726, in Robles 1946:47).

The northern El Paso branch of the Camino Real passed, with considerable difficulty, over the Médanos de Samalayuca. The road must have continued directly below the western terminus of the Sierra Presidio in the approximate area of Highway 45: a low but extensive dune field exists to the west, while the route along the immediate western base of the Sierra Presidio is firm. From our vantage a view to the north revealed a possible track paralleling the railroad in the area from Gloria a Dios toward the old estación aduana.

A doorway in the Sierra Presidio north of the dunes was appropriately named Puerto Presidio, as this pass opens the region north of the dunes northeast to the San Elizario Presidio area. Zebulon Pike came this way from the presidio south to Ojo Samalayuca on March 26, 1807. This route is not often noted in the historical records, but for the traveler headed north and having passed the dunes this is the shortest route to civilization and water (20 kilometers) as opposed to the 35 kilometer distance north to El Paso.

S. of Paso is an extensive flat country, the Rio Grande running through it to the S.E. We carried with us casks of water for the next day, and stopped on the 10th in a barren district. On the 11th we came to a water-hole of not very good water, called Ojo Samaluka (Colonel Pike names it Ogo-mal-a-Ukap). Here we remained the whole of the 12th, to enable half the waggons to be carried on by double teams over the Arenales. On the 13th, the oxen having returned, we accompanied the remainder of the waggons. This remarkable district, called the Arenales, is about six miles across, and extends as far as we could see to our right and left. It is a series of high round or dome-shaped sand-hills of fine white sand (Falconer 1930:98).

Puerto Presidio also appears to have been used by the Oñate expedition. In the Itinerary of the expedition we find that the caravan crossed the dunes and then found the river at three leagues distance and 31.5° latitude. Subsequently, the colonists traveled 8.5 leagues up the river to the pass. These distances suggest that the caravan passed to the east via Puerto Presidio and joined the Río del Norte somewhere in the area between Guadalupe and San Elizario.

[From the 1598 Itinerary of the Oñate Colonization]: On the 12th [April 1598], three leagues to the openings of the sand dunes (Bocas de los Médanos). There we remained until the 19th, because, since the preceding watering places did not have sufficient water for the oxen and livestock, they had to be driven down to the Río del Norte. At this place we buried an Indian boy.

On April 19 we entered the sand dunes, with only a little more than half the train, and traveled three leagues. We spent the night without water. The rest of the carts remained at the opening of the sand dunes, waiting for a reinforcement of oxen.

On the 20th we traveled three leagues to the Río del Norte (Hammond 1953:314).

Having learned something about the regional geography we proceeded to the village of

Samalayuca. Here we questioned local residents about the locus of the original Ojo Samalayuca. We were directed to a source about two kilometers southeast of the village. Today Ojo Samalayuca is dry, but the wells, an earthen tank, and a swimming pool indicate considerable water in the recent past. The farms in the valley to the north irrigate from wells, and in the past ten years the water table has fallen below the level of this once reliable source.

On the 18th we traveled eleven leagues to the north. As soon as we crossed the little Bordo pass we entered some very troublesome sand dunes two leagues long with several slopes. . . . One league after we had crossed them we came to another very sandy slope. Then we descended to a plain covered with mesquite, huizaches, etc. and traveled one league to the Samalayuca spring, which forms a pond surrounded by trees. It is necessary to approach cautiously, for enemies use it, and, from the shelter of its thickly wooded banks, are wont to surprise and kill passersby (Lafora 1766–1768, in Kinnaird 1958:82).

A number of old roads enter the Ojo Samalayuca. Two narrow tracks of apparent twentieth-century affinity enter from the northwest and lead toward estación Samalayuca. Four tracks 10–15 m in width appear to have antiquity and are probably avenues of the Camino Real. The soil in the area of the spring is gypsum and the tracks are deep (up to 50 cm) and well preserved. One swale enters from the southwest at 212° magnetic north and leads in the direction of the eastern terminus of Sierra Samalayuca and to the west of a group of low hills. Two additional nearly parallel tracks lead south-southeast at 146° toward a northern inlet in the dunes. A well-defined track leads north at 350° (magnetic), which is the direction of the western terminus of the Sierra Presidio. The tracks are well defined and lined with vegetation. A large hand-forged tack was found on the southwest avenue and an olive jar sherd was found on the north avenue.

When the wind blows, this sand is set in motion, filling up the former valleys, and forming new drifts or hills. The road is then entirely obliterated; not a foot-print or wagon rut being left to show its direction. The whitened bones of mules and cattle project here and there from the sand, with an occasional carcass which had dried up before the wolves discovered it. Although these hills lie on the direct road from El Paso to the city of Chihuahua, which is shorter than any other by sixty miles, it is invariably avoided by trains or loaded wagons. These take the river route, which passes entirely beyond their furthest southern extremity. Persons on horseback, pack-mules, and light pleasure wagons alone attempt to cross the hills.

Two miles brought us to the spring known as *Samalayuca*. It is a complete oasis in the desert, and consists of a small pool of water, in and around which are bushes and trees. It seems to be placed here by nature, for the weary and thirsty traveller, by whom the route would else be impassable (Bartlett [1854] 1965:376–377).



Fig. 2.3
John Russell Bartlett.
Courtesy Rio Grande
Press, Chicago.

There is desuetude at Ojo Samalayuca, a sense of lost hope, in the empty desiccated oasis. Cool waters flowing across the rock are only a memory. Now there is dust, cracked and baked earth in the empty pool.

Towards sunset we passed a most extraordinary mountain of loose shifting sand, three miles in breadth, and, according to the Paseños, sixty in length. The huge rolling mass of sand is nearly destitute of vegetation, save here and there a bunch of greasewood half-buried in the sand. Road there is none, but a track across is marked by the skeletons of dead bodies of oxen, and of mules and horses, which everywhere meet the eye. On one ridge the upper half of a human skeleton protruded from the sand, and bones of animals and carcasses [*sic*] in every stage of decay. The sand is knee deep, and constantly shifting, and pack-animals have great difficulty in passing. After sunset we reached a dirty, stagnant pool, known as the “Ojo de Malayuca” [*sic*] (Ruxton [1847] 1973:164).

There is considerable evidence of aboriginal occupation in the Ojo Samalayuca area. Chipped stone tools were scattered about the perimeter. A cluster of sherds (including brownware and a Mimbres Boldface sherd) occurs in a plowed area of dark midden soil east of the springs.

In the evening we move to an encampment approximately seven kilometers east of Ojo Samalayuca on the northern margin of the dunes. The north edge of the dunes in this area is littered with aboriginal cultural debris. This material extends into the dunes for a distance of 100 m but not beyond. The artifacts are found in blowouts but also on the sides of dunes, resting directly upon the sand. This suggests that the dunes along the north margin are quite stable, although they are quite bare. Scattered about are concentrations of chipped stone, occasional ground stone, an abundance of fragmented bone and occasional sherds (brownwares, El Paso Bichrome). Most of the bone, which appears in phenomenal quantities, is burned and fragmented. Canine, ungulate, and rabbit bones were identified.

Below the dunes along the northern margin a very ancient floor level (a Paleo B soil formation) is exposed in the sides of the deepest blowouts. It consists of a 20 cm thick zone of consolidated sands containing iron and carbonate inclusions. The upper surface is quite level and below the floor is sand. What is of interest is that the formation is elevated approximately 5 to 10 meters above the adjacent desert landscape. It appears that the dunes have preserved an ancient floor which in the adjacent basin was swept away long ago.



Fig. 2.4
Josiah Gregg.
Drawn from a photograph
of an old daguerreotype.
Courtesy University of
Oklahoma Press, Norman.

The Samalayuca Dunes have arisen from the floor of a primordial lake. El Barreal was once a vast inland sea into which the waters of the ancient Río Grande poured. The Samalayuca sands have emerged from the desert playas of this ghost lake and have crept northeast of El Barreal into an uplifted sea against the backdrop of the Sierra Presidio and drifting eastward into the Puerto Sabinoso. The dunes east of Ojo Samalayuca are a mountain of fine white sand with crests extending across the range on a north-south axis.

From our camp to the east is the ragged wall of the Sierra Presidio, a range of limestone steps and the Puerto Presidio, named for its gateway opening toward Presidio San Elizario, now abandoned for more than a century.

At the distance of about thirty miles [south of El Paso] we reached *Los Médanos*, a stupendous ledge of sand-hills, across which the road passes for six miles. As teams are never able to haul the loaded wagons over this region of loose sand, we engaged an *atajo* of mules at El Paso, upon

which to convey our goods across. These Médanos consist of huge hillocks and ridges of pure sand, in many places without a vestige of vegetation. Through the lowest gaps between the hills, the road winds its way (Gregg in Moorhead 1954:274).

In the desert dawn the palmillas are silhouetted against the pale opalescent sky, the morning star a bead of mercury. The sharp staccato of the coyotes is muffled beyond the dunes. Another morning, like the mornings of antiquity, begins in the solitude of this desert landscape. The Samalayuca dunes at dawn are a frozen white sculpture bordered by the blue serrated ranges of Presidio and Samalayuca.

EL BORDO

Eight kilometers south of the Médanos de Samalayuca is a low ridge of barren hills formed by the Cerros Las Felipas on the east and the Sierra Las Conchas on the west. This low ridge or divide is the “El Bordo Pass” and paraje noted in Lafora’s 1766–1768 diary (Kinnaird 1958:81). From this low divide the “Boca de los Médanos” (Hammond 1953:314) is visible as a recessed entrance to the dunes.

On the 17th we traveled nine leagues taking a general course north one quarter northeast over a great plain with an abundance of pasture and here and there mesquite and huizaches. To the right were the Ranchería mountains midway to the Río Grande del Norte which is about three or four leagues the other side of them. On the left is La Candelaria of which I have already spoken. We went to camp near a small pool of very bad rain-water in El Bordo Pass (Lafora 1766–1768, in Kinnaird 1958:81).

There are two passes through El Bordo hills, one in the area of Highway 45 and the other to the west through which the railroad passes. Either location would provide an excellent path for the camino. A tinaja containing runoff occurs directly adjacent to and east of the highway on the pass summit. This catchment tank is perhaps the “small pool of very bad rain water” noted by Lafora.

The hilltop west of the highway affords an excellent view across the plains north and south. To the north a possible camino track parallels the highway about ½ km to the east. Two other linear features were observed to the south, also parallel to and east of the highway.

As we descended the cerro, we were met by a group of customs officers in plain clothes. As we stumbled down the slope they surrounded our vehicle, lifted their automatic weapons, and engaged the clips. With a lump in the throat and weakened knees we approached the group. The new customs station is visible from the summit of El Bordo, and we had noticed it on the plain to the south. The officers were concerned that we were on the hilltop to scope out the customs facility. A brief explanation of our intent and they were off, leaving us a bit shaken but again on our way south across the plano between the Sierras Rancheria and Candelaria.

In the notes of the Texan–Santa Fe Expedition a location called “Puerta de la Piedra” was encountered directly south of the Samalayuca dunes. “We halted in the evening at an opening between some hills, called the Puerta de la Piedra. There were two large mountains on each side of us, the one called Candelera [*sic*], and the other Rancheria” (Falconer 1930:99).

The plano between Sierra La Candelaria and Sierra La Rancheria is an open and level region, with a hard surface.

LAGUNA CANDELARIA

El día ocho al rumbo del Norte cuarta al Nordeste, por tierra llana con monte espeso de mezquites, huizaches y uñas de gato, caminé ocho leguas, dejando en esta distancia a la banda del Este la sierra que llaman de Ranchería, y al del Oeste la de Candelaria;

y pasando el cañón que forman las dos sierras, hice noche en el despoblado y laguna de Candelaria, al Noroeste de esta laguna, se mira otra algo más inferior (Pedro de Rivera 1726, in Robles 1946:47).

OJO LUCERO

Reconnaissance continued in the area of El Lucero in an effort to locate Ojo Lucero, which was located approximately three miles north of Laguna de Patos. Ojo Lucero is an important water source and paraje since it is the location where the El Puerto del Norte and the Presidio (northeast branch) roads join and the first water source encountered after the long jornada from the north.

Various locations identified as Lucero (Ojo Lucero, Banco El Lucero, Estación Lucero, El Lucero) appear on the El Lucero 1:50,000 topographic map in the area adjacent to Highway 45. Reconnaissance at each of these locations yielded no definite result. The trail was not located, nor were historic artifacts encountered. Most of these locations are now quite dry because agricultural wells to the east have lowered the water table.

The first location inspected is Ojo El Lucero (*abandonado*), located directly west of the highway. At this abandoned rancho a large pipe extends into a empty hole and old irrigation canals extend from the well. No evidence of the camino or associated artifacts were observed. We then inspected the area of Los Dos, a windmill located two kilometers east of the highway, again without result. A visit to El Lucero further east revealed leveled cotton fields and irrigation wells. No original water source could be identified, and no local residents were found. We returned to a rancho near the highway and interviewed a man who directed us to a *pila* (tank), now quite dry, adjacent to the railroad track. This was formerly Estación Lucero, which is now located to the north. (This location is directly east of the Ojo Lucero on the topo map.) A large rock-walled tank is present at this location but no historic artifacts were observed. Inspection of the area on a low rise east of the tank and railroad revealed concentrations of prehistoric artifacts including brownware ceramics.

A north-south track was seen east of and parallel to the railroad but it is undetermined if this is the camino. The Banco Lucero area was also inspected, but this location has been extensively leveled for cultivation and no evidence of the camino was found.

The reconnaissance in the Lucero area failed to reveal the specific location of the trail and the original spring, although it no doubt existed in the general area. The considerable agricultural development, now mostly abandoned, has resulted in extensive modification of the landscape. Aerial inspection of the area and location of the road juncture here may result in the determination of the original spring.

On the 16th [July 1766] we marched eight leagues to the north-northeast over level bare land, very marshy in rainy season. At the end of four leagues there is a very abundant spring near the medium-sized Los Platos (Patos) lagoon. At the end of another four leagues is Lucero spring with oily and salty water. Here we camped. This afternoon we had a furious rain storm with thunder and lightning. The lightning struck nearby and the wind was so strong that it blew down our tents, leaving us exposed throughout the downpour (Lafora in Kinnaird 1958:81).

Our course to-day south-west towards the direct route from El Paso to Chihuahua; and with the exception of a few places, the road was good. [We passed] over a broad plain [bordered by barren mountains] . . . their summits presenting a jagged and fantastic appearance. Turrets and cupolas, huge towers and castles, alternately were seen. . . . Fifteen miles brought us to the *Ojo de Lucero* (Venus's Spring), which

furnishes but a small supply of water. We did not stop here, but pushed on to the *Laguna de los Patos* (Duck Lake), six miles further (Bartlett [1853] 1965:406).

August 18, [1847] - Made in the morning 15 miles, and camped again in the prairie, on a water pool. In the forenoon we passed *Ojo Lucero* (Venus spring,) and *Laguna de Patos*, (lake of the geese.) The first is a fine spring, only a hundred yards to the left of our road. The water comes out of a small, sandy basin in the prairie, but with considerable force; it is clear and soft of taste; the temperature of the spring was 77.5° Fah., while the atmosphere in the shade was 81° Fah. A little creek, formed by it, crossed the road, and spread to the right of it into a small lake. Some miles ahead, to the left of our road, but more distant from it, a larger lake is seen in the plain, the *Laguna de Patos* (Wislizenus 1969:44).

Monday 22 [1847] Ojo (spring). We are just through an other *Jornada*. Saturday evening we started into it, travelled all that night nearly; stopped near daylight, rested some two hours, took a little sleep, and started again, travelled till noon, stopped a few hours, and then drove on till mid-night, rested till day - and started again, and now at noon we have made the first water, a mean little spring out in the level plain; the water is *black*, and standing, the animals are sent off some three miles to a *laguna* where they get fresh water. Here we shall remain tonight (Susan Shelby Magoffin, in Drumm 1975:224).



Fig. 2.5
Susan Shelby Magoffin.
From a daguerreotype in 1845.
Courtesy William Gannon,
Publisher, Santa Fe.

THE SPRINGS AT LAGUNA DE LOS PATOS

The next morning we started before daylight, and at sunrise watered our animals at the little lake called *Laguna de Patos*, from the ducks which frequent it; and at midday we halted at another spring, the *Ojo de le Estrella*—star spring—where we again watered them, as we should be obliged to camp that night without water (Ruxton [1847] 1973:163).

In the late afternoon we initiated the search for “mound spring” in the area directly north of Lago de Patos at Ojo Coyote, adjacent to and east of the highway. This area was inspected but no evidence of the camino or associated artifacts were found.

Near dusk and into Villa Ahumada for supplies and fuel. Standing at the Ice House we were again approached by unmarked police, with belted 45 revolvers. “Why is it,” they questioned, “that your vehicle is so dusty?” Another explanation: “Somos Profesores de historia. . . .”

It is evening and we are encamped in a hidden corner of mesquite near the western shore of *Laguna de los Patos*. We have taken photos at dusk across the level clay floor of the laguna, now quite dry. This is a strange landscape. In the western sky a blue meteorite is seen; Mars is bright in the southeast; the moon rises at midnight. All is quiet, in our uneasy seclusion, save the coyotes.

October 5, 1988. In the dark before dawn we are up snapping mesquite twigs for the coffee fire and out onto the barren floor of the Lago de Patos at sunrise for photographs. Our objective now is to locate mound spring, said in the records to be about one mile north of the lake. The road leads across the floor of the lake bed. Various levels of the ancient lake shore can be seen along the playa margins, especially on the west.

On the 8th [April 1598] we went to Ciénega de la Concepción [i.e., apparent Laguna de los Patos], three leagues. Here the sand dunes began. On the 10th, a league and a half to San León spring, a small water hole a short distance to the right of the road [i.e., Ojo de Pato or Ojo Lucero] (Hammond 1953:313).

El día siete [May 1726] al rumbo del Nor-Nordeste, por tierra y monte igual al del día antecedente, caminé ocho leguas, haciendo alto en un despoblado donde hay un ojo de agua caliente, que llaman Los Patos del cual hay una laguna de agua dulce (Pedro de Rivera in Robles 1946:47).

Tuesday 23rd [1847]. This morning we have passed a perfect curiosity, a *spring in the top of a hill*; which occupies I think an acre of ground; the spring itself is some six feet wide, the water clear, rather warm and runs off down the side of the hill loosing itself in the sand at its foot (Susan Shelby Magoffin, in Drumm 1975:225).

Between the Ojo Lucero and lake Patos, but to the right of our road [west], rises a square mound, some 20 feet high, and on its level top a warm spring boils up in the very centre. The presence of many similar springs in this valley proves that there is no absolute want of water here, and Artesian wells would most likely strike a large subterranean water basin. Near the lake Patos the two roads from el Paso meet again (Wislizenus 1969:44).

The spring is located at El Alamo, a ranchito situated on a point between two northern bays of the laguna. Here beautiful dunes border the dry playa. We are greeted by the amiable owner and permitted to inspect the area. There are two springs here, both on mound summits and separated by 500 m. Another cluster of trees is still further south and El Coyote is to the west, which substantiates Wislizenus's observation that there are "many similar springs in this valley." It is probable, however, that El Alamo is the mound spring of the Camino Real.

El Alamo springs appear on the summits of low mounds elevated 5 to 10 m above the adjacent lake bed. Dunes surround the mounds, but the substrata is a gypsum soil. Some mysterious force moves the water up onto the mounds above the perfectly dry surrounding countryside. There are three springs in a row along the ridge point extending into the lake. Each is marked by an island of trees conspicuous in the open plano of dune and mesquite. In the north mound, which is now dry, there is an ever so great willow, some two meters in diameter, reclining with the wind. The south and middle mounds have pools lined with rock and the middle spring is choked with tules. The El Alamo ranchito is located at the south spring.

A variety of materials of all epochs was observed at the south ridge point. A wide track, possibly the camino, approaches this site from the north.

We are confident that El Alamo spring, and in particular the south point, is the mound spring of the Camino Real. The Camino track should prove in the aerial reconnaissance to lead to this area, although the shifting dune hummocks in this area may make recognition of the roadway difficult.

DESAYUNO EN VILLA AHUMADA

We went in search of a large pueblo (termed here "Montezumas") described by Brand on the west bank of the Río Carmen approximately two miles southwest of Villa Ahumada. The roads are wet and muddy. We came by again a few days later on our return north but failed to locate the site said to be the largest in the region.

CARRIZAL

We have now come to Carrizal, which was once the only town on the Camino Real between El Paso and Chihuahua. The village of Carrizal is located at an oasis which wells up in a small cleft of the desert floor. In order to incorporate this jewel in the desert, the Camino Real deviated in its course to the west, which required a return eastward both to the north and south of the village.

Wednesday 24th [March 1847] Carazal. Or rather on the sequia [acequia] of Carazal, some three quarters of a mile from the village; the water is perfectly *clear lime-stone water*, the first I have seen since we left Santa Fé, *six months* and in truth, its pure, sweet taste so astonished me on tasting it, I really stoped [*sic*] to see if I were drinking water, or something else (Magoffin in Drumm 1975:225).

Bishop Tamarón in 1760 describes Carrizal as the south boundary of New Mexico: "In the south the boundary is Carrizal, which is thirty-six leagues from El Paso. The eastern boundary is eighty leagues downstream from El Paso at the junction with the Conchos River" (Adams 1953:192).

The village of Carrizal was once the site of "El Presidio de San Fernando de Carrizal" and the only colonial settlement between the Río Grande and the haciendas of the Laguna Encinillas. Lafora visited the village in 1766 and refers to the site as a "small settlement of mestizos and mulattoes" established in 1759. The Cienega de Carrizal may have also been the former site of a seventeenth-century hacienda, but these early settlements in the district were abandoned during the 1684 Suma Rebellion.

This pueblo is new, and its titular patron is San Fernando. It was founded in the year 1758 by Captain Don Manuel de San Juan, who paid the expenses of fifty settlers equipped as soldiers and with what was necessary for their farms out of his own private means. A secular priest was appointed, with 400 pesos paid to him by the King. For the protection of these people, twenty soldiers from the presidio of El Paso are stationed here, and they are replaced at regular intervals. When I visited there, the church was started, and the priest has since written me that it is finished. He also asked me for vestments, which I will give as soon as I receive another report on the state of affairs there, for I fear that it will not survive, although it is a very necessary outpost. It has lands with abundant irrigation. It is thirty-six leagues south of El Paso on the way to Chihuahua. There are 41 families, with 171 persons. It belongs to New Mexico (Bishop Tamarón 1760, in Adams 1953:197).

As a result of the Lafora survey and under the Reglamento Order of 1772 (Brinckerhoff and Faulk 1965) Carrizal was selected for the site of a presidio, one of 15 presidios to be established across the Northern Frontier from the Gulf of California to the Gulf of Mexico. A small garrison of 10 men and a corporal from the El Paso Presidio were stationed at the site as early as 1755 (Lafora in Kinnaird 1958:81). In 1774 O'Connor located the specific site for the presidio (Cutter 1994:61) and construction presumably followed.

On the 14th [July 1766], as I have already said, we arrived at Carrizal, a small settlement of mestizos and mulattoes. Although it was founded seven years ago (1759) it has no increase in that time because it is continually exposed to Indian incursions, which do not permit the inhabitants to prosper. The abundant land and water would be sufficient for a great number of inhabitants, but no one desires to live in this country because of the great danger, for it is the pass by which enemy Gileños

and Pharaones enter Nueva Vizcaya. A squad of ten men and a corporal from the presidio of El Paso is maintained at this place. However, since most of them are occupied in caring for their horses, they are of little or no use in guarding the settlement nor attacking the enemies who pass by daily with their spoils (Lafora in Kinnaird 1958:81).



Fig. 2.6
Lt. Zebulon Pike. From J.P. Dunn, *Massacres of the Mountains*, New York, 1886. Reproduced in Andrew K. Gregg, *New Mexico in the Nineteenth Century: A Pictorial History*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1968.

Mar. 27th. [1807] Friday - Arrived at Carracal (Carrizal) at twelve o'clock, Distance of 28 miles; the road well watered and situation pleasant. The father-in-law of our friend, commanded six or seven years here. When we arrived at the fort, the commandant, Don Pedro Rues Saramende, received Robinson and myself with a cold bow, and informed Malgares, that we could repair to the public quarters. To this Malgares indignantly replied, that he should accompany us, and turned to go, when the commandant took him by the arm, made many apologies to him and us, and we at length reluctantly entered his quarters. Here for the first time I saw the gazettes of Mexico, which gave rumors of Colonel (Aaron) Burr's conspiracies, the movement of our troops, etc.; but which were stated in so vague and undefined a manner, as only to create our anxiety without throwing any light on the subject (Pike 1810, in Coues 1895:690).

The village of Carrizal was occupied by military personnel from as early as 1776 until at least 1847 when the post was taken by Doniphan's forces (Connelley 1907:400). The walled fort-town of Carrizal at one time housed 300 soldiers and their families (Lister and Lister 1966:103). Pike visited the presidio in 1807 but gives no detailed description. Dr. Wislizenus passed by in 1847 and describes Carrizal as "a small country town: it was formerly a presidio or fort, and has therefore a wall yet around it, and some soldiers in it" (Wislizenus 1969:45). Bartlett in 1854 describes the location as "an old dilapidated presidio, and now nearly depopulated; more than half the houses being tenantless."

Kirker's party . . . proceeded far in advance of the army by direction from the Colonel, for the purpose of making a reconnoissance at Carrizal, where they had understood a body of Mexicans were posted. This place is on the other side of the desert. Before their arrival there, however the Mexican soldiery abandoned the place. Therefore they entered it and took military possession in the name of the United States' government; the Alcalde, without offering the slightest resistance, giving a written certificate of submission (Connelley 1907:400).

In the pueblo of Carrizal we visited with a resident of 82 years, señora Bellaza Rivera Ruiz. Señora Ruiz relates that her grandfather was one of 29 residents from Carrizal who were killed by Victorio in 1879 in the Sierra Candelaria. "My grandmother sold tortillas to the soldiers in the presidio. The Pueblo of Carrizal in my youth was quite large. The church dedicated to San Fernando is the second largest in Chihuahua. Now most everyone has moved away, many to Villa Ahumada. The post office closed some years ago. Now many of the youth live in Texas and California. Have you seen our cienega? It is very fine and has ample water for our crops, fields, and orchards."

"My Grandfather, God rest his soul, was killed by Apaches in the Sierra Candelaria."

The ruins of Presidio Carrizal are defined by rather substantial adobe mounds which exist in the village on the level bench land east of the cienega. A map and archaeological survey (Gerald 1968:24) of the presidio have been completed. The presidio was enclosed by a massive adobe wall and had a large diamond-shaped bastion on the southeast corner. The enclosed area is quite large, extending some 160 m north-south by 100 m east-west. The ruins of the presidio are defined by rather substantial adobe mounds extending from one to two meters above grade. The south bastion is approximately 20 m across. The size of the enclosure and elevation of the mounds indicate that the presidio construction was quite massive.

Near the lake Patos the two roads from el Paso meet again. Opposite to our noon camp to-day, in the western mountain chain, rose an isolated mountain [cerro banco del lucero] of very singular form; at the base conical, on the top flat, and sufficiently large for a fort. This conspicuous mountain is seen for a long distance. In the afternoon we travelled 12 miles more, and reached *Carrizal*, the only town on the road from Paso to Chihuahua. We camped in the place. Carrizal is a small country town; it was formerly a presidio or fort, and has therefore a wall yet around it, and some soldiers in it; but for all that, it is not safer from the Indians than without them (Wislizenus 1969:45).

Various rooms were constructed within the enclosure, and walled corrals measuring 120 by 30 m are appended to the south. Portions of the presidio are concealed by modern buildings. The presidio chapel is said to be located at the east-central wall. The present church is quite large and occupies the northwest corner of the presidio area. Midden debris of seventeenth-century affinity exists outside the south wall and in the corral area. San Elizario Polychrome, majolica, and olive jar fragments were found in this area. A series of rather large house mounds exists outside the presidio enclosure to the east. These structures appear to be early nineteenth century buildings as they have a variety of Santa Fe trade goods scattered about (black and aquamarine glass, delft, black and blue banded ironstone, etc.) We also found, to our surprise, an Acoma Polychrome sherd.

In the 1726 *Diario* of Pedro de Rivera there is reference to a visit of Suma Indians to his encampment at Ojo Caliente and the indication that a Suman settlement existed at El Carrizal. The Rivera party appears to have traveled from Ojo Caliente directly north to Ojo Los Patos, which might have been the route of the Camino Real prior to the 1758 establishment of the Hispanic San Fernando de Carrizal.

Este día por la tarde con la noticia de haber llegado yo a este paraje, se aparecieron en él, siete indios de la nación Suma, que asisten en un paraje que se llama el Carrizal . . . (Pedro de Rivera, May 1726; in Robles 1946:46–47).

Additional survey work in the Carrizal area would prove productive, and this area should be a target for intensive investigation by the Camino Real Project.

OJO CALIENTE

We now begin a search for the celebrated Ojo Caliente on the Camino Real. The historical records describe this spring (paraje) as 10 to 12 miles southeast of Carrizal and approximately one-half to one mile north of the Río Carmen. The spring is said to issue from the base of a rocky hill and flow out into the Río Carmen. The topographic maps suggest that the location is along the southeastern slope of Cerro La Aguja in the vicinity of El Branco, El Olivio, and Santa Rosa. We attempted to approach this area following tracks down the Río Carmen but failed because the tracks turned out to be dead ends. We therefore returned to Carrizal and Villa Ahumada and approached the Aguja range from

Highway 45 at El Vado Station.

Our calculations have proven quite accurate. Los vecinos de Olivio se dijeron: “Si Señores aqui esta el lugar que les Buscan; El Ojo Caliente.” The spring is found in a cluster of trees in the mesquite savanna at the base of a rotund black rock hill. There is a rock wall around an earthen tank and nearby is the small dilapidated church of Santa Rosa de Ojo Caliente. Ojo Caliente is located on the southeastern base of Cerro Aguja two kilometers above the Río Carmen and six kilometers west of Estación El Vado. The camino appears to approach the spring across a low rocky pass between Cerro Aguja and Cerro Tabaco.

In the 1726 diary of Pedro de Rivera we learn that the vicinity of Ojo Caliente was occupied by four Hispanic “ranchos de labor” and that the nearby site of El Carrizal was the location of a Suman settlement. By 1758 El Carrizal was occupied by Hispanic populations.

El día seis [May 1726] al rumbo del Noroeste franco, caminé siete leguas por tierra llana, con algún monte, de pequeños romerillos; en cuya distancia se pasó un arroyo seco [this is probably the Río Carmen], y encontrando con una pequeña población de españoles y mestizos, primera de la Nueva México que consiste solo en cuatro ranchoes de labor, donde se siembra trigo y maíz, que llaman el Ojo Caliente, dónde hice noche (Pedro de Rivera 1726, in Robles 1946:46).

The spring which issued from a bedrock ledge at the base of the cerro is now quite dry. A large *pila* (tank) surrounded by rock wall indicates that the source was once substantial. A large cottonwood and willow trees surround the spring area. The hill above the spring is a rotund rock prominence which forms a southeastern point of the Cerro Aguja range.

Ojo Caliente is a very solitary place. From the lonely summit of the Ojo Caliente hilltop a vast panorama extends beyond the plains of the Río Carmen to the distant Sierra Chivato. The entrance to the Jornada de Gallego passes out onto this empty plain populated only by distant peñoles, like islands in a sea of mesquite. From the oasis of Ojo Caliente the dusty tracks of the camino lead out onto a plano devoid of water for 50 miles until the distant Ojo Gallego is found.

On April 3 [1598], we set out from this place, and, after traveling that day and the next, we reached the Río de la Mentira, so named because, although it had a large bed and many trees, it does not carry a drop of water [i.e., Río Carmen]. Two harquebus shots beyond it, extending for more than three leagues to the east, is the marsh of Los Baños de San Isidro, which is formed by some springs, nearly hot. It is located in almost 30-1/2 degrees (Hammond 1953:313).

The historical references from 1766 to 1853 describe Ojo Caliente as an important paraje and water source along the Camino Real but without associated settlement. Lafora in 1766 refers to the “ruins of a fine hacienda, once known as Ojo Caliente.” This early settlement of probable seventeenth-century affiliation was probably abandoned as a result of the Suma Rebellion in 1684 and the region was much abandoned as a result of subsequent Apache predation. A massive masonry wall, almost one meter in width and largely covered with talus debris, found by the east hill slope near the spring may be the remnants of this early settlement.

On the 14th we traveled nine leagues north, one quarter northwest and northwest over ground like the preceding. At three leagues we crossed dry-shod over the Carmen river. East of it, at the foot of a small hill, is a very copious hot spring. Here there are ruins of fine hacienda, once known as Ojo Caliente, and it is here that the jurisdiction

of New Mexico begins. The place is five leagues from the small settlement of Carrizal, where we spent the night (Lafora 1766, in Kinnaird 1958:74).

On March 28, 1807, Zebulon Pike left the Carrizal Presidio and traveled south to Ojo Caliente, leaving the cryptic statement: "Marched at half past three o'clock, and arrived at Warm Springs (Ojo Calientes) at sundown; crossed one little fosse on the route" (Pike 1810, in Coues 1895:652).

[April 1847] we arrived early at the Ojo Caliente, . . . Of course we all enjoyed the Luxury of a bath in this celebrated spring and found it both pleasant and necessary as we were not very clean after travelling 140 miles (from Chihuahua city) over sandy and dusty roads, with scarcely enough water to drink and cook, much less to wash our hands and faces. The Pool, made by the first explorers of the Country, contains many fish and we amused ourselves in the afternoon angling for the finny tribe and succeeded in procuring enough for supper which we found very fine (Gibson, in Frazer 1981:16).

[August 19, 1847] In a distance of 10 miles (from Carrizal) we passed *Ojo Caliente*, (warm spring). It is a clear, pure water, in a large basin of porphyritic rocks, with sandy bottom, out of which many warm springs come to the surface. The thermometer, placed in the springs, showed 82° Fah.; the atmosphere 84.5° Fah. As an outlet from the basin, a creek runs into the Carmen below. . . . About one mile south of the Ojo, we crossed the *Rio Carmen*, quite a river at that time, but in the dry season generally without a drop of water (Wislizenus 1969:45).

At meridian on Sunday the 21st (1847), the command reached the celebrated "Ojo Caliente," or Warm Spring, where the men were again permitted to rest a few hours, and make preparations for crossing another desert forty-five miles wide without water. From this place Capt. Skillman, with twelve volunteers, was dispatched to the Laguna de Encenillas, to keep up a close espionage on the movements of the enemy; for it was now anticipated that he would give battle at that place. The Ojo Caliente is at the base of a ledge of rocky hills, and furnishes a vast volume of water, about blood-warm, which runs off in the direction of the Patos. The basin of the spring is about one hundred and twenty feet long and seventy-five wide, with an average depth of four feet. The bottom consists of sparkling, white sand, and the water is perfectly transparent. No effort, by disturbing the sand, was sufficient to becloud, or muddy the crystal wall.* Col. Doniphan, and many of his officers and men, now enjoyed the most luxurious, and rejuvenescent bathing. Thus refreshed, the march was commenced upon the desert (Connelley 1907:402).

* This ojo caliente was formerly the seat of a princely Hacienda, belonging to Porus, a Spanish nabob, who at one time, had grazing on his pastures more than thirty-six thousand head of cattle and sheep (Col. John T. Hughes 1847, in Connelley 1907).

Thursday 25. [1847] *Ojo Caliente* (Hot spring). Left Caresel (*sic*) this A.M. about 10 o'clock arrived here (twelve miles) by 3 o'clock P.M., here we shall visit a day or two, prior to starting into the *last jornada*. The "*Ojo Caliente*" is a pretty place; the water bursts out at the foot of a hill making a beautiful pool, which is some four or five feet deep, perfectly clear, and warm; it runs off into a beautiful and long stream; it is the regular

and last camping spot before entering another *jornada* of 50 miles (Susan Shelby Magoffin, in Drumm 1975:226).

[October 16, 1853] Twelve miles [from Carrizal] brought us to *Ojo Caliente* (Warm Spring). Although we had made but a short day's march, it was thought best to stop here; as there lay before us a *jornada* of fifty miles without water, which it would require two full days to accomplish.

Ojo Caliente is a spring which rises from the plain about one hundred and fifty yards from the base of a rocky hill. Its temperature is nearly the same as that of the atmosphere. A small pool about one hundred and twenty feet in circuit, and from three to four deep, is here formed, with a sandy bottom, from which warm water bubbles up in many places; this water has an outlet through a small creek into the river Carmen, in which creek some fish were taken and preserved for specimens. This basin afforded an excellent opportunity for a bath, and the whole party took advantage of it. A well built stone wall, about a yard in thickness, and laid in cement, is built across the basin, apparently for the purpose of raising the water. A portion of this wall is now broken away. I imagine it to be the work of the Spaniards, who, at some former period, have resorted hither for the benefit of the water. No traces of buildings could be found near the pool; yet there may be in the plain near. It is now, and doubtless has long been the resort of Indians, as there are many mortars in the adjacent rocks. Along one side of the hill there appeared to be a rude wall; and on the summit were circles and heaps of stone, which bore the traces of fire. From here a most extensive view was presented, on three sides unobstructed by mountains (Bartlett [1854] 1969:410–411).

A series of primitive stacked rock circles (2 to 5 m in diameter), a single rectangular enclosure, and a group of rock cairns appear on the summit of the adjacent hill. These structures and a group of bedrock mortars, located near the spring, were also observed by Bartlett in 1853. These features are apparent aboriginal construction of undetermined affinity. A large area of the summit and the east hill slope has been extensively mined by looters apparently looking for treasure. The rock ledges and boulder faces of the hill were inspected for graffiti or rock art and none was observed.

In 1853 Bartlett referred to a rock wall enclosing the spring and stated that “no traces of buildings could be found near the pool.” A series of adobe house mounds now surrounds the spring, and the Santa Rosa church, partly in ruins, still stands. Artifacts found in the area of these mounds suggest an occupation in the late nineteenth–early twentieth century (ca. 1860 or 1870 to 1920–1930). The earliest tombstone seen in the Santa Rosa *campo santo* has a date of 1905. It appears as if this settlement of “Santa Rosa de Ojo Caliente” was occupied for the most part after the construction of the railroad and hence after the abandonment of the Camino Real as a major caravan route.

L A S B O Q U I L L A S

A paraje named Las Boquillas is recorded in the diary of Pedro de Rivera in 1726 as a location in the *jornada* between Ojo Gallego and Ojo Caliente, and this location is said to be the southern boundary of New Mexico.

El día cinco [May 1726] al rumbo del Nor-Noroeste, por tierra con algunas lomas y cañadas, con serranías a la vista, sin monte digno de reparar, caminé doce leguas; haciendo noche en un despoblado sin agua que llaman las Boquillas, término de la Nueva México (Pedro de Rivera 1726, in Robles 1946:46).

SIERRA GALLEGO

The springs and tinajas in the western canyons of the Sierra Gallego are the southern parajes of the Jornada de Gallego. This jornada extends south from Ojo Caliente on the north for 80 km, more or less to the Sierra Gallego. On October 8 we visited the western edge of the Sierra Gallego, attempting to locate the springs listed as Ojo Gallego and Ojo Gallegito in the historical records.

The southernmost source, Ojo Gallegito, is named on the El Sueco topographic map as Los Alamos–El Gallegito. It is on the southwestern edge of the main cordillera due east of Estacion Gallego. We visited this location and found a whitewashed estancia on the mesquite savanna near the mouth of a steep canyon. Water is piped to the estancia and nearby stock tanks from the spring which is located in the canyon above. The source itself is located at the base of a boulder field/rock slide on the steep slope of the canyon. Bartlett's 1854 description of the spring as among a line of trees on the side of the sierra is accurate. Only dogs greeted us at the estancia, and for want of permission, we did not visit the actual spring area.

On the first of April [1598] we set out on a march of nine leagues, during which we found no water. After traveling three leagues, God succored us with a downpour so heavy that very large pools were formed. Then we unyoked the cattle, and more than five thousand head of livestock of all kinds drank, and later two thousand more head of cattle and mares that were following behind. Therefore we named this place Socorro del Cielo (Hammond 1953:313).

This place, which they gratefully called "El Socorro del Cielo," cannot be fixed on the map, but the Charquito de Jesús María, a small water hole in a gulch at the foot of a steep mountain about eighteen miles north of Chivato is in this vicinity (Moorhead 1958:15).

Following the powerline which parallels the sierra we proceeded north, making a preliminary inspection of the lower canyons for Ojo Gallego, which is said in the records to be two to four miles distant from Gallegito. On the northwest edge of the sierra east of El Sueco we found a corral with a group of vaqueros separating cattle for market. We discussed the camino with these fellows and were informed that tinajas exist in three of the canyons which exit from the northwest side of the Sierra Gallego. No spring today is known as Ojo Gallego. It appears as if the tinajas in the adjacent sierra are not technically considered springs. In contrast, the vaqueros refer to a rather fine spring in the western face of the Sierra Chivato. This is the apparent spring noted by Lafora in 1766. One of the vaqueros seemed well versed in the history of northern Mexico, and proceeded to discuss recent publications on the subject. We had here, with a round of cerveza, a rather pleasant conversation.

Above the corrals there is an abandoned windmill at the entrance to a canyon. Two tall cerros, one on each side, guard the entrance to this canyon. From the summit of the north cerro we are able to see a great tract of the North American Southwest; a Chihuahuan cyclorama. To the east, across the curvature of the earth, is the backdrop of the Coahuilan basin range, a vast beautiful desolation. To the north is the naked plain of the Jornada de Gallego.

We camped at the small waterhole of Jesús María [3 leagues south of the Río Carmen a paraje south of Ojo Caliente in the El Gallego Jornada], a tiny pond of rain water caught in a little ravine at the foot of a very steep hill. It is near a small pass. To the east of this lies the valley of Santa Clara, now abandoned and overrun by enemies (Lafora 1766–1768, in Kinnaird 1958:74).

From this elevated platform we are able to reconnoiter the terrain and learned that there are two canyons on the northwest slope of the Sierra Gallego from which water flows. The cerro we have ascended is between these canyons. We have found in the canyon floor bedrock tinajas filled with water from the rains of the past month.

El día cuatro [May 1726] al rumbo del Nor-Nordeste, por tierra sin diferencia notable como la antecedente, caminé siete leguas; habiendo hecho alto en un despoblado que llaman el Gallego, que hay un ojo de agua de la que se cargó para la jornada siguiente (Pedro de Rivera 1726, in Robles 1946:46).

Because of its rugged nature this range [Sierra Los Arados] is the usual fortress of the enemies and serves them as a retreat in their forays. For this reason the spring [El Chivato] is very dangerous, as is that of Gallego, which lies to the right of the road among some hills midway on this day's journey. They are favorite meeting places of the Apaches, . . . (Lafora 1766–1768, in Kinnaird 1958:73).

Mar. 30th [1807]. Marched before seven o'clock; the front arrived at water at eleven o'clock; the mules, at twelve. The spring on the side of the mountain, to the east of the road, is a beautiful situation. I here saw the first ash timber I observed in the country. This water is 52 miles from the Warm Springs. Yesterday and to-day saw cabrie (antelope, *Antilocapra americana*). Marched 15 miles further and encamped without wood or water; passed two other small springs to the east of the road (Pike 1810, in Coues 1895:654).

The next day we marched twelve miles, and came to the Guyagas Springs. These issue in leaping, gushing, cool streamlets, out from the western base of a system of rocky bluffs, and refresh the neighboring plain. Here the men and animals slaked their burning thirst. Under the jutting rocks and archways of this mountain range, were seen dependent spar, crystal of quartz, and the most brilliant stalactites. . . . Here in a narrow valley, with lofty, rocky ridges on either hand, the men were dismounted and allowed to rest for the night; during which M. Robards, a good soldier, died and was buried (Connelley 1907:403).

August 21 [1847] Took an early start and marched 20 miles before we halted in the prairie. Passed this morning the *Oj* [sic] *de Callejo*, (at present a creek,) which comes from the near mountains to our left and crosses the road, but in the dry season a mere spring, that must be followed up to the mountains. About four miles south of it, and about one mile east of the road, I was informed, exists another spring in the mountains, the Callejito [sic] spring (Wislizenus 1969:45).

Monday 29th [1847]. *Guyllego* [sic] *spring*. A most beautiful spot indeed, well may one rejoice at passing that last long *jornada*, for they not only leave it behind them forever perhaps--but they exchange it for one of nature's "beauty spots." The spring which takes its name from a place in old Spain, (whether a spring or cave I know not) is at the foot of an exceeding high mountain, so steep and rocky it looks wholly impassable for man; on either side or similar ones, steep, rugged and perpendicular; the spring resembles a cave, though a very small one, the water is rather warm, runs off in a brisk little branch, forming a small pool one hundred yards from the spring; from this first pool it runs off some 100 and twenty to fifty yards, forming two others

rather larger than the first; for a quarter of a mile before reaching the spring, are green trees and bushes, all of which are new to me (Susan Shelby Magoffin, in Drumm 1975:227).

Eight or ten miles brought us to a point opposite the *Ojo de Callego [sic]* (Spring of the Mountain Pass), a ravine in the mountain to our left, where there was a fine spring in a thick grove of cotton-woods. It seemed a likely place for Indians to conceal themselves in, and, with an enemy at our heels, we had no desire to stop there. We therefore filled our water kegs from a pool near at hand, without entering the ravine. A couple of miles further on, we passed the *Ojo de Callecito [sic]*, marked by a few cotton-woods on the mountain side (Bartlett [1854] 1965:415).

We see from this elevated platform the distinct lineation of the camino passing across the plano below and parallel to the Sierra Gallego. The trail, which is about one kilometer below the range, is defined by a continuous alignment of mesquite. From the mouth of the canyons mesquite-lined arroyos twist out onto the grassland toward the camino. One can imagine given ample rain that small ritos once existed in these arroyos as described in the historical records.

The vast Planos de Jesus-Maria, the jornada from Ojo Caliente to the Sierra Gallego, are visible from this cerro. The camino passes below and east of the Sierra Chivato—a dark range of flat-topped cerros with fluted basaltic walls. There, Apaches attacked the 1853 Bartlett caravan.

The Sierra Gallego is a beautiful range which invites exploration. Tall, pointed hills flank the canyon entrances, and the upper sierra has flat-blocked slopes and peaks with sparse oak forests extending to an elevation of 2200 m. Gnarled agates and crystal geodes litter the rocky vesicular rhyolitic slopes of the sierra. In a north canyon of the range is a solitary basaltic plug. We climbed this low plug, which fosters growths of giant prickly pear and ocotillo. A black lizard the color of this dark-metallic rock was seen here—a species adapted to a small island of basalt. An iron cross is placed on the plug summit and an abandoned rock corral is present at a cliff base on the north side of the plug. No rock art or graffiti were seen here. Below Cerro Negro a scatter of chipped stone was found, at the foot of the hill and in the canyon floor. Some chipped stone was also observed in the northwest canyon near the abandoned windmill. On the summit of the tall hill above the windmill there is some evidence of primitive masonry, perhaps protective blinds made by Apache or Mexican Revolutionists.

No historical artifacts were found in the canyon entrance areas. Travelers along the Camino Real probably camped on the plains below the sierra to avoid surprise attack by the Apache who are known to have frequented the area. Various accounts refer to passing below the Sierra Gallego and obtaining water from the rito which crossed the road.

From the summit of the cerro the path of the camino, defined by a distinct line of mesquite, is visible. This path is in the grassland slope about one kilometer below the range. It is a linear zone of mesquite about 50 meters in width. We visited this linear feature on the morning of October 9. No swale is visible here and the ground is quite hard. The wide path is perhaps due to the tandem passage of wagons and to the wide passage of driven stock. We found here, in an arroyo cut along the trail, a lenticular stratum 50 cm in depth, which appears to be the railway. It is possible that a former road swale in this area has refilled with natural deposits. The only artifact found in a brief inspection is a brown bottle fragment with a concave base.

We observed here, in the plano below the Sierra Gallego, two curiosities of nature: a large black and yellow grasshopper (unlike any species in New Mexico) and what appeared to be a two-toned “pinto” jackrabbit (*Lepus callotis*, the white-sided jackrabbit). I am now literally holding the camera together. The wide-angle lens has come to pieces and the camera back latch is insecure. This

expedition could use a patrón.

We are encamped, on the night of October 8, on a canyon floor in the Sierra Gallego. Our campfire is below a mesquite tree not far from the tinajas. The tent is up in the event of rain, as clouds and lightning appear in the west. Coyotes serenade us in the evening and at dawn. We place our bags along the wash distant from camp in the event of a nighttime visit, that we might slip away into the darkness. Upon our exit from the sierra in the morning we meet the Comisario de Policia del Sueco, a large weather-beaten fellow with calloused hands and a belted 45 revolver.

INSPECTION OF THE ENCINILLAS AREA

On the morning of October 8 we left Ciudad Chihuahua, stopping briefly at the university library, and proceeded to reconnoiter the Encinillas area. Our main objective with three days at our disposal is to explore the Sierra Gallegos area and the Jornada de Contarecio, but a brief geographic inspection of the Encinillas area was made along the way. This consisted of a brief visit to El Peñol and a drive up a dirt track along the east side of Laguna Encinillas following the approximate route of the camino.

Las Bocas

[The Oñate] caravan reached the "Bocas del Peñol de Vélez," where the ten- to fifteen-mile-wide valley of Encinillas through which they had been traveling for the last thirty-five or forty miles is all but closed by the convergence of the bordering mountain ranges. In later times this narrow pass, the highest elevation (approximately 5,300 feet) on the road between Chihuahua and El Paso, was variously known as Las Bocas, La Puerta, and El Callejón (Moorhead 1958:14-15).

El Peñol

In the afternoon it commenced raining again; and after a most tiresome march, during which I had to put additional mules to my wagon, I arrived late in the evening at "*el Peñol*," a large hacienda, (28 miles from last night's camp.) The creek by the same name passing by the hacienda is the principal affluent of the lake of Encinillas; by the rains it was swelled to a torrent, and its roaring waves, rushing over all obstacles, sounded in the stillness of the night like a cataract. The distance of *el Peñol* to Chihuahua is about 40 miles (Wislizenus 1969:46).

Twenty miles brought us to *El Peñol*, a large hacienda, near which a herd of cattle was grazing. There did not appear to be any land under cultivation here: the raising of stock, for which the broad grassy plains are so admirably adapted, seemed to be the sole purpose of the establishment. Near by is a small stream of clear water, bearing the same name as the hacienda, which discharges itself into the lake (Bartlett 1965:417).

Still another hacienda, *El Peñol*, was established on an arroyo of the same name in the valley during the nineteenth century (from Almada's *Geografía del estado de Chihuahua*, p. 259; Moorhead 1958:14).

El Peñol is a small village southeast of Laguna Encinillas near the southern terminus of the Lomas la Rifa. A singular and fluted basalt plug above the village gives it its name. Photographs were taken but no exploration of the area was made. We proceeded north on a track which follows along the east side of the Encinillas basin to *El Cuarenta y Cinco* and eventually on to *San Martin*, a very isolated village on the rail due east of the present lake. The Encinillas basin is a veritable sea of grass.

According to Hughes, in 1847 the camino passed “parallel to the lake, and about two hundred yards from it.” The roadway thus passed between the lake and the adjacent Lomas La Rifa, Cerros La Escondida, Sierra de Oso, and Cerro El Venado (only the latter is limestone). We did encounter a possible track of the camino in the grassland mesquite savanna north of El Peñol and below the dunes which fringe the La Rifa foothills.

Laguna San Martín, Laguna Encinillas

Pedro de Rivera in May of 1726 traveled eight leagues north-northwest of the hacienda of San Juan de Las Encinillas and encamped “junto a una laguna que corre su largo de dos leguas Noroeste Sudeste, que se llama de San Martín” (Robles 1946:46). This location is said to be seven leagues south of El Gallego in the Laguna Encinillas area.

The “valle de San Martín” is listed in the March 1598 itinerary of the Oñate expedition. The colonists entered the Valle de San Martín “at a point near a lone mountain, round and bare.” This location is said to be some 13 leagues from Laguna de San Benito, a large lake two leagues around, which is the apparent Laguna San Martín of later accounts (Hammond 1953:312).

A march of two rather long leagues to a stand of cottonwoods, called “Alameda de Nuestra Señora,” and another of one league, on March 25 [1598 brought the Oñate caravan] . . . to some small springs and a large lagoon having the same taste and smell as the lake at Mexico City. This they called the “Laguna de San Benito,” which could only have been the Laguna de Encinillas, a shallow body of brackish water in the valley bottom (Moorhead 1958:14).

Encinillas Village

On the opposite side of the valley, to the west, and near the termination of the lake (south end), is the village of *Encinillas*, consisting of a church and a cluster of adobe houses. This village, as well as El Peñol and the vast grounds adjacent are the property of General Trias, formerly governor of Chihuahua (Bartlett [1854] 1965:418).

Near the western mountain chain we perceived several settlements, haciendas, and villages—*Encinillas*, for instance, on the southern end of the lake, and *Sauz* further south (Wislizenus 1969:46).

Encinillas Hacienda

On the opposite side of the lake [laguna Encinillas] appeared a hacienda amid a grove of cotton-woods—a beautiful spot, which might compare with the highly cultivated grounds of a European nobleman; but the mark of ruin was upon it—the Apaches had driven away its occupants, and it was fast crumbling to decay.” [This location is north of El Peñol, while the village of Encinillas is located near the south end of the lake west of El Peñol.] (Bartlett [1854] 1965:417)

El día dos [mayo 1726], al rumbo del Noroeste por tierra tan fértil y fecunda como la antecedente, solo con la diferencia de haber encontrado en este día un pequeño monte de encinos y pluridad de ojos de agua, que contribuyen a la mayor producción de las semillas de la hacienda de labor que llaman San Juan de las Encinillas; dónde hice noche, habiendo caminado ocho leguas (Pedro de Rivera in Robles 1946:46).

Oñate's visit to the Encinillas area is recorded as follows:

On the 22 [March 1598] to the oak grove of Resurrección and Ojos Milagrossos, so named because, when a horse stepped in a bog near a spring, a waterspout about the thickness of an orange shot into the air nearly the height of a man and then continued flowing about one span high. We spent Easter Sunday at this place (Hammond 1953:312).

We rejoined the highway about 45 miles north of El Peñol at Cordon El Gato. The cordon is a break in a rock ridge through which the highway and the railroad pass. This is also a likely area for the camino passage, and the rock ledges here should be inspected for graffiti. Following this brief inspection of the Encinillas area we proceed north to begin a more intensive inspection of the Sierra Gallego area.

JORNADA DE CONTARECIO

Heavily loaded wagons seldom ventured over the Médeanos, but on leaving El Paso del Norte continued down a southeasterly road . . . then doubling back to the southwest over the Jornada del Cantarrecio. This traversed only a margin of the dunes. Fifteen miles from the river there was a water hole. . . . This route . . . was much preferred by the wagoners (Moorhead 1958:114–115).

On the afternoon of October 9 we left Villa Ahumada to reconnoiter the Jornada de Contarecio, the northeastern branch of the Camino Real. We returned to the springs of El Alamo at Laguna de los Patos and then out into the open dunelands south of the Sierra Rancheria. We first wished to visit the Charcos de Grado described by Bartlett in 1854, the location on Los Charcos Arroyo below the southeastern base of the Sierra Rancheria indicated on the Villa Ahumada maps as Ranchito Charco de Grado.

[Leaving on October 15, 1853, Bartlett's party proceeded on a course] south-west towards the direct route from El Paso to Chihuahua; and with the exception of a few places, the road was good. . . . We made twenty-five miles (at least so it was called by the Mexicans), and encamped at *Charco de Grado*. . . . The water here is found in small pools, supplied by springs; but so meagre is the supply, that I doubt whether it can be depended upon in the dry season. . . . Fifteen miles brought us to the *Ojo de Lucero* (Bartlett 1965:406).

From an isolated grove of palmillas (La Palma) we followed a track north to a solitary ranchito, San Francisco. Here we found the gateways chained. The locked gates prevent the passage of vehicles around the customs station. It was therefore not possible to visit the Charcos de Grado. We discussed this situation with an Indian woman and her two barefoot children at San Francisco. "There is nothing here, but airplanes pass by here often, especially at night." This rancho is a singular habitation in an empty plain of creosote. The palmillas and the immense expanse of this district are reminiscent of the Jornada del Muerto.

We return to La Palma and continue east, passing to the south of Cerro Indio, called here Cerro Bola. It is a limestone knob of globular form and most distinct. We traveled on to the east on a narrow track over a low pass at the south end of Sierra Presidio passing only one truck today. From the south terminus of the Sierra Presidio and across an immense plano is the Sierra Alcappara and the lofty picachos de Alcappara. The Alcappara is a deserted island-range in the empty plano. This district is a great unpopulated section of the North American Southwest. We encamp below the southeastern

terminus of the Sierra Presidio. Under the overcast sky of nightfall is the incandescence of Ciudad Juárez observed over the misty ridges of the Sierra Presidio. Nightfall brought lightning and thunder from the Sierra Alcappara, and in the darkness above camp we hear the passage of cranes flying south. This was also observed at camp in the Sierra Gallego.

We passed a very agreeable night, fresh with mist and without a sound save the distant thunder. The odor of creosote permeates the morning air. A light rain commenced at 4:00 A.M. and we arose at dawn, making coffee in the gray light of the Chihuahuan morning.

On this morning of October 10 we travel northeast across the overcast plano of San Elizario north toward La Ventana de Sierra Presidio and the Tinajas de Cantarecio. The vegetation to the east of the Presidio is the more classic or robust Chihuahuan type with large yucca macrocarpa, a species unseen in the mesquite- and palmilla-bespeckled plains to the west.

Tinajas de Cantarecio

about 9 o'clock in the morning (Tuesday April 13, 1847) arrived at the Cantaresio 30 miles from the Laguna (de los Patos). We met at the gap in the mountains about midnight several wagons loaded for Chihuahua. . . . After our usual Siesta we left the Cantaresio at half past four in the Evening having 25 miles of sandy, broken road to pass over before we reach the Rio Grande, our animals needing water very much (Gibson, in Frazer 1981:18).

[October 1879] After leaving Guadalupe the trail [of the Apaches] went south, following closely the stage road from Juarez to Chihuahua. Not long after leaving town we met a courier coming to Guadalupe from Don Ramon Arranda's ranch, San Marcos de Cantarica, twenty-one miles distant, who informed us that Apaches had killed a herder on that ranch and had taken four horses and sixteen mules belonging to the stage company. We hurried onward and reached Cantarica at sunset, having traveled seventy-eight miles since one o'clock that morning. Both men and horses were rather tired (Gillett 1925:154).

we moved off once more, passing through Guadalupe, and stopped at a small lagoon, three miles beyond, where we encamped. We could have travelled a couple of hours longer, but were told there was no water within fifteen miles, which we could not make before dark, as a portion of the road was very sandy. [On the following day] We left the valley of the Rio Grande . . . and ascended the table-land, which was thinly covered with chaporral [*sic*] without grass. The road was sandy yet we made fifteen miles, and encamped at Cantarecio, where there is a spring of good water (Bartlett [1854] 1965:405).

Cantarecio Jornada. We broke up camp at ten o'clock and for the first eight miles found the road broken and sandy, and after stopping a few hours in the middle of the day to rest our animals, continued our march until ten o'clock at night, when we encamped within four miles of Cantarecio, the night cloudy (and) very dark, and occasionally sprinkling rain. Here a mail from Santa Fé overtook us, and we once more have the pleasure of reading letters from our friends and picking up a few scraps of news in the papers. Having no water and but little wood, we made an early start next morning and nooned it at the gap in the mountains [La Ventana], the roads being exceeding dusty and dry. As the day before, we continued our march in the evening

until about ten o'clock, when we camped without water again and scarcely a particle of wood, having to spend an unpleasant night. The third day we resumed our march and about two o'clock came to Ojo Lucero, which we found a mudhole, and which our animals refused to drink; . . . (Gibson in Bieber 1974:333).

Cloud cover has prevented a view of the La Ventana area and as we proceed the rain has become quite strong. The road, passing across clay flats, is very muddy and we are a bit apprehensive about our exit from these plains. We continued north, passing to the west of Cerros Barragales and the entrance to the Rancho Contarecio. Now all is very wet and overcast, and reconnaissance of the Contarecio area is prevented.

The road north to Guadalupe passes along the western edge of the Sierra San Ignacio, a beautiful upturned limestone wall some 5,500 feet in elevation, which invites exploration. Wide and deep arroyos, very impressive, lead out from the northwest slopes of the range down to the Río Grande. These are fringed by dune fields over limestone ledges. The camino here is below the range, crossing a low stabilized dune field.

Coming down from the Sierra San Ignacio into the drenched town of Guadalupe we are returned abruptly to civilization. The streets of Guadalupe are like lakes and we retreat into a cozy cafe.

Gracias a Dios por un buen viaje. ♣



Fig. 2.7
View of Chihuahua, 1850

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Floods, Fords, and Shifting Sands

Dan Scurlock



TRAVEL ON THE NORTHERN PORTION of the Camino Real, which followed the Río Grande, was affected by weather, topography, soil types, river levels, locations and bottom sediments of fords, and changes in courses of the river. This paper will examine the interrelationships of the Camino Real and three of these elements—floods, channel movements, and fords—all part of the historically dynamic Río Grande. Fords facilitated river crossing, but current level and velocity and quicksands hampered them. Carts, wagons, and animals sometimes became mired, or even washed away. Floods frequently delayed road travel or crossing of fords. The shifting of specific reaches of the Río Grande's channels washed away sections of the road and, less frequently, forced the road from one side of the river to the other. Attempts to permanently bridge the river, usually at well-established fords, during the colonial, Mexican, and early Anglo periods, were unsuccessful. These efforts will also be discussed.

THE ROUTES

The original route of the northern section of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro extended north from Chihuahua to the Río Grande, just below El Paso, through the pass and across the river, along the east or left bank, leaving the river at Rincon, then stretching north across the Jornada del Muerto and joining the river again, just south of San Marcial, then following the east side of the valley through present-day San Antonio, San Pedro, La Joya, Tomé, Albuquerque, Bernalillo, San Felipe, and Cochiti to San Juan Pueblo, the original terminus (Moorhead 1958:18–27; Figure 3.1). The mission supply caravans of 1610–1679 followed this same route, except the road now left the river at Santo Domingo Pueblo and extended northeastward to the new capital at Santa Fe. As settlements sprang up on the west side of the river, and the main route on the other side of the Río Grande became more worn and rutted, another valley branch opened up connecting villages on the right, or west, bank. Major villages were Socorro, Alamillo, Sabinal, Belen, Los Lunas, and Atrisco. Upper road branches, just above the edges of the floodplain, were also used in times of flood and/or muddy conditions in the valley.

The route along the reach of the river west of the Jornada del Muerto between Valverde and Rincon was infrequently used because it was longer and had more difficult topography. Near present-day Valverde, northeast of Black Mesa, the Río Grande bends westward in a bow-shaped arc, shifting

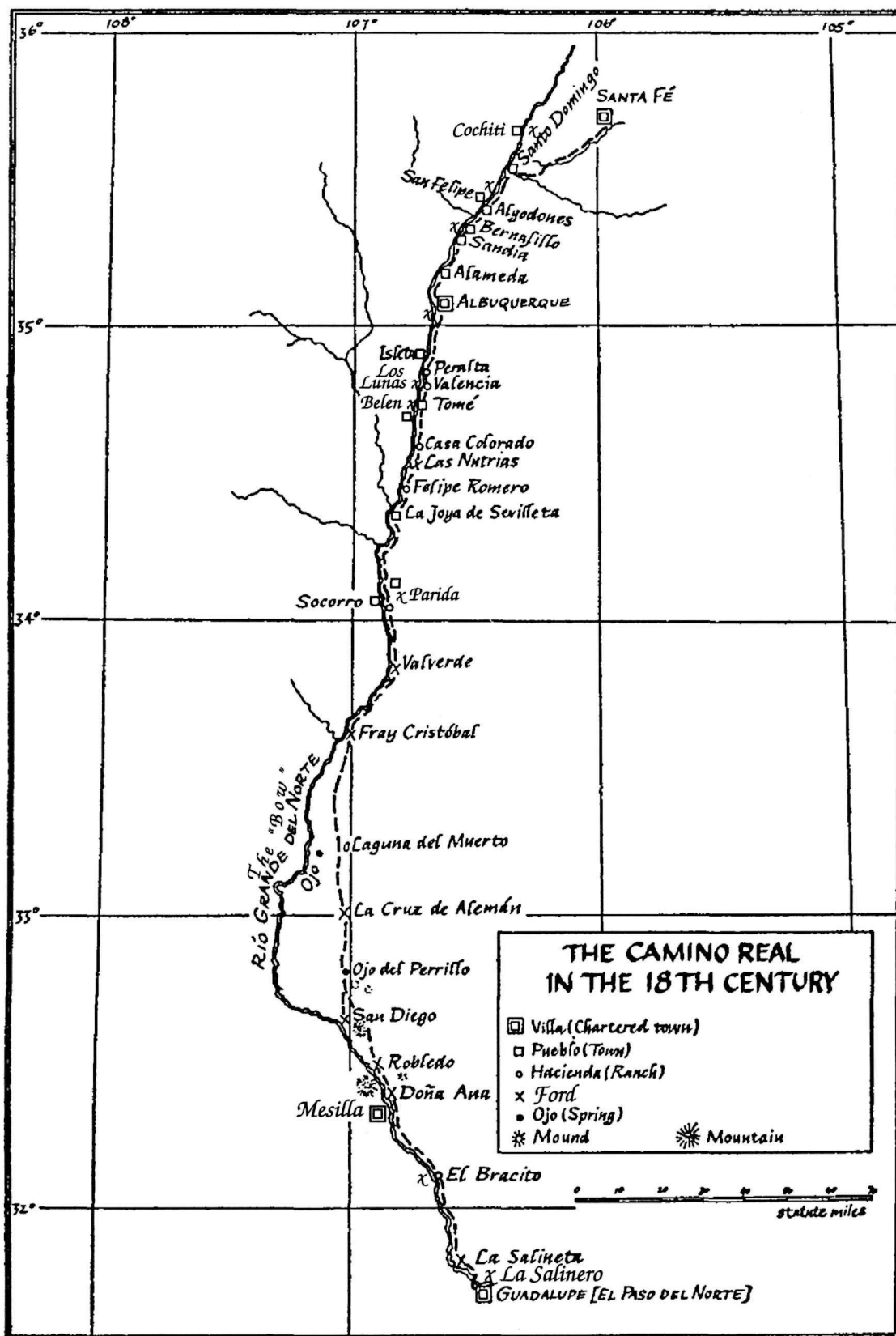


Fig. 3.1 Major settlements and fords along the Camino Real. Modified from New Mexico's Royal Road: Trade and Travel on the Chihuahua Trail, Max L. Moorhead, 1958. Courtesy University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

back to a more southerly flow near modern Rincon. Some of the early Spanish entradas, and the prehistoric Pueblo and other Native American groups, followed the river along this curve, or “bow,” through broken, rough country. Beginning with Oñate, most Spanish and later Anglo caravans “strung the bow,” taking the straight and considerably shorter north-south route across the 90-mile Jornada del Muerto. The longer river route was negotiable for travelers on foot or on horseback, for mule trains, carriages, or light wagons, but not heavily loaded carts or wagons. Large herds of livestock were more easily driven over the jornada route.

One of the first Europeans to follow this river trail was Espejo, in late January 1583. He led fourteen soldiers and a priest, whose supplies and goods were carried by pack animals. Espejo left this description of the bow as his expedition moved up the river:

We left Humos on the twenty-eighth of the month and on that day traveled five leagues through a mountainous district close to the said river. This ridge contains numerous veins of silver, which extend more than ten or twelve leagues. We stopped by the river and called this place El Penol de los Cedros. It was given this name because here there is a large black rock, and all the ranges and gorges are covered with juniper trees and, in some parts, oak groves, a fine asset for the exploitation of silver.

We left this place on the thirtieth and went seven leagues, stopping at the river. We named the spot La Punta de Buena Esperanza.

We set out from this place on the thirty-first of January and went four leagues to a marsh which we named El Mal Pais, because it is close to some bad lands (Hammond and Rey 1966:170).

The large, black rock was Elephant Butte and the El Malpais marsh was near or at Black Mesa, or El Contadero.

The first U.S.–Mexican boundary survey expedition, led by John R. Bartlett, chose to follow the bow of the river above modern Rincon. Here, in late April 1851, the party turned from the lower Jornada del Muerto west to San Diego, which he called “the old fording place.” As they descended into the Río Grande Valley, Bartlett wrote, “Our eyes were gratified with the sight of trees and shrubbery, and more grass than we had seen since leaving El Paso.” The expedition continued up the river, passing cottonwood bosques and “excellent grass,” until the recently settled village of Santa Bárbara was reached. The last 14 miles of the road was “sandy and rough.” The men left the valley a couple of miles above this village to travel west to Santa Rita (Bartlett 1965[I]:215–217).

One later description of the north part of the bow was made by Lt. William Emory (Calvin 1968:88–92), who surveyed downriver from Socorro, below the north end of the Jornada del Muerto. He passed cottonwood bosques and grama grasses on the benches adjacent to the floodplain. At the base of the Fray Cristóbal Mountains, the Río Grande flowed through a canyon cut through mesas, forcing the expedition to briefly travel over the “tablelands,” as he called them. Camped near San Felipe, Emory saw “considerable signs” of several mammals and observed various species of birds. Moving downriver, the valley again narrowed to a canyon at Bush Peak. More than three miles below, he and his men left the river to travel west to the Gila country.

WATER OVER THE CAMINO REAL: RÍO GRANDE FLOODS

The environmental element most disruptive to travel and traffic on the Camino Real was floods on the Río Grande. These periodic events inundated the valley branches of the main road, creating impassable mires; washing out sections of the road; causing the river channel to shift, leaving villages

connected by the road on opposite sides of the river, or totally destroying them; damaging or washing away bridges; and delaying river crossings, or making them more dangerous.

A minimum of 82 moderate to major floods have been documented along the Río Grande from San Juan Pueblo to San Elizario, below El Paso (Scurlock 1998). There are, no doubt, considerably more floods described in the Spanish, Mexican, and early territorial archives. Floods generally occurred in the spring (April to June) as a result of snow melt in the upper Río Grande watershed in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. Intense summer rains between early July and late September also caused local flash floods, as well as high water levels regionwide.

The mission supply caravan of the seventeenth century was held up by high water at least twice at the lower of two fords at El Paso. The first occurred in the spring and early summer of 1665 when 22 wagons from Mexico City arrived, then waited for three months for the water to recede so a crossing could be made (Moorhead 1958:35). In September 1680, right after the Pueblo Revolt, the supply caravan was again stopped above El Paso, this time across from Canutillo, as a result of flooding caused by heavy rains. Twenty-four wagons were halted for several weeks; one, pulled by four teams of mules, finally made it across, but all of the cargo was ruined. The remainder of the supplies were transported across on the backs of mules to the hungry Spanish and Pueblo refugees who had fled south and were by then camped on the east bank (Sonnichsen 1968:31–32).

When the floodplain was inundated, the upper branches of the Camino were used for travel (Moorhead 1958:106). These skirted the edge of the valley, generally following the contours of the ancient Río Grande terraces of sand and/or gravels and rocks. Adolph A. Wislizenus (1969:34), staying at a rancho near Albuquerque in mid July 1846, described a situation when use of the upper road was necessitated by intense rain in the valley:

On July 15, at last I discovered from the top of the house, my usual observatory, the approach of the caravan. They had been detained, as I supposed, by the falling of the rains, which made part of the road along the river nearly impassable. Riding up, I found them in the worst kind of miry bottom, and it took them one day and a half to reach from here a higher and better road running east of Albuquerque.

The expedition found this upper road drier, but very sandy.

LIVING WITH A CHANGING RIVER: CHANNEL SHIFTS

When the first Spanish expeditions of the sixteenth century traveled up and down the Río Grande, the river, unlike today, was a dynamic, ever-changing hydrologic system. It was, generally, a perennially flowing, slightly sinuous and braided river. The river was constantly adjusting, seeking a new balance between water volume and sediment load. Over time, the riverbed consisted of sand simultaneously building up and shifting. The Río Grande was constantly seeking a new route and periodically would leave its elevated channel and create a new one at a lower elevation in the valley (Bullard and Wells 1992; Crawford et al. 1993:19). This process is known as avulsion. During this migration across its floodplain, the river would eliminate entire reaches of bosque (riverine woodlands), banks, and sometimes fields and houses. New sandbars, and probably new fords, would be created by this action as well. Old fords would be wiped out or modified.

This hydrologic pattern continued throughout the history of the Camino Real, although flow was gradually reduced as diversion for irrigation farming generally increased. Near the end of the road's use, in 1867, William A. Bell recorded this astute observation:

The greater part of the valley is here almost entirely destitute of trees. This may be partly accounted for by the fact that the banks of the river are of a sandy, friable nature, and that the bed of the stream is always changing its position, sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other; thus destroying fields of corn, irrigating canals, and villages; taking from one man and giving to another, covering rich tracts of alluvial soil with sand and rubbish, and undermining the trees which had arrived at maturity on the firm dry land (1965:241–242).

During flood-generated migration of the Río Grande, old channels might be filled with sedimentary deposits, or they might be filled with water, creating an *estero* (swamp) or *charco* (pond). A trail also might be inundated or washed away during this action; in some instances the remains of settlements were covered by a deposit of silt and sand one or more feet in depth (Sargeant 1987:37–38). Obviously, trails and roads sometimes had to be rerouted as a result of these changes in the river. Over time the Camino Real, similar to the Río Grande, was a braided network of alternate roads which was almost constantly changing because of these and other factors (Moorhead 1958:106).

One of the earliest and best documented shifts in the river channel involved the reach from Los Ranchos, north of Albuquerque, to Angostura, just south of San Felipe Pueblo. Beginning ca. 1709–1710, the Río Grande in this area began to shift westward, destroying the east, or right-bank, villages of Bernalillo, then located north of the present town site, and Alameda. Both villages were reestablished on the new east, or left, bank of the river (Figure 3.2; Bowen and Sacca 1971:51; Chávez

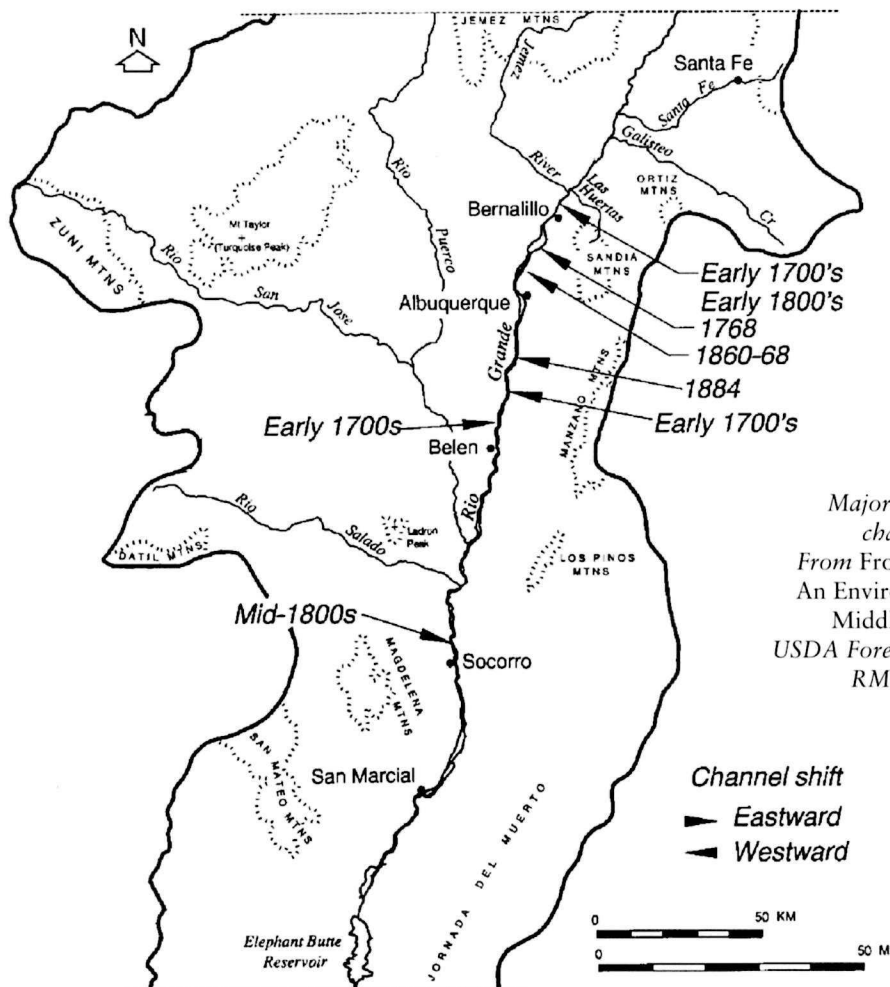


Fig. 3.2
Major Middle Río Grande
channel movements.
From From the Rio to the Sierra:
An Environmental History of the
Middle Rio Grande Basin,
USDA Forest Service Gen. Tech. Rep.
RMRS-GTR-5, 1998,
Fort Collins.

1957:3; Sargeant 1987:38–40; Snow 1976:172–175). A 1735 or 1736 flood once again destroyed the church and several homes at Bernalillo. By 1763 floods and movement of the river forced some Bernalillo residents north to the Algodones area, and by the early 1800s, others moved to the site of present-day Bernalillo (Bayer et al. 1994:90; Snow 1976:175). During these floods road traffic detoured to the upper branch of the Camino Real, which skirted the eastern edge of the uplands at the margin of the floodplain east of the river.

In 1769 another Río Grande flood south of Isleta Pueblo shifted the channel eastward, flooding most of Tomé. Fray Dominguez, in 1776, related some of the associated events:

in the year '69 of this century the river flooded (turning east) the greater part of Tome, to the total destruction of houses and lands. It follows this course to this day [1776], and as a joke (let us put it so) it left its old bed free for farmland for the citizens of Belen, opposite Tome (and they still have it, and Father Claramonte, from whom I heard this story, has seen it planted) (Adams and Chávez 1956:8).

Suffice it to say, this is an example of an immediate, adaptive response to environmental change by Hispanic farmers in colonial New Mexico. In the next century the river shifted eastward periodically and flowed in an old channel.

One of two alternate branches of the Camino Real between El Paso and Chihuahua, the one that followed the El Paso valley downstream, has a relatively long history of impact from changes in the channel. In the late 1600s and 1700s the road along with the settlements of San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta del Sur were located on the right, or south, bank of the Río Grande. In 1829, a major flood caused the main channel to shift to the south, leaving the Camino Real and villages on the north, or left, bank of the river (Peterson and Brown 1994:8–9).

In the early 1850s a U.S. Army surgeon stationed in Socorro, located in the Middle Rio Grande Valley, was told by local residents that the river channel in the area probably changed every year (Hammond 1966:24–25). Other mid-nineteenth-century observers along the Río Grande made this same observation. John Bartlett (1965[I]:217–218), camped on the west side of the Río Grande near a lake or *estero* at Santa Bárbara, concluded that this landscape feature “must have been frequently the channel of the Rio Grande” and he further noted, “it is continually changing its bed, where great bends occur. The laguna is now supplied by overflow from the river.”

Adolph Bandelier, in 1882, observed that between Sile and Peña Blanca, the river “was divided into five narrow and swift-running branches.” That same year he also wrote in his journal, “The Rio Grande is very treacherous. . . . It changes its bed almost daily” (Lange 1959:79–80).

In 1860, another reach of the river shifted, this time in southern New Mexico. Prior to this year the Río Grande flowed on the east between Mesilla and Las Cruces, but a flood moved the channel westward, leaving both settlements on the east bank (Bell 1965:242; Cozzens 1988:277).

Upriver, in Sierra County, floods in 1862 and 1865 destroyed the acequias and fields at Alamosa, on the west side of the Río Grande. Another village, Alamocita, was settled on the opposite, or east side of the valley in 1866 or 1867. By 1880 it was abandoned when the river shifted westward (Wilson 1988:336–337).

To the north, near Albuquerque, the Río Grande temporarily shifted its channel to the west, toward Atrisco, in 1868. It flowed there for only a few weeks, moving back to its original channel but leaving a remnant channel behind (U.S. Surveyor General and Court of Private Land Claims 1894). A short distance downstream, during part of the nineteenth century the river sometimes flowed in its old channel, located east of Peralta and Valencia along the edge of the floodplain (Scurlock 1988:31; Wozniak 1987:134–135).

FORDS

A ford, or *vado* in Spanish, is “a place where a river, or other water, may be passed by wading” according to Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary. Velazquez (1973:644) defines a *vado* as “a broad, shallow, level part of a river.” Natural river crossings on the Río Grande had been used by Native Americans long before the Camino Real was opened by the Spanish in the late sixteenth century. The river corridor was a major trade route in the late prehistoric period, and aboriginal movement up and downstream was brisk (Riley 1993). When Oñate crossed the Río Grande just above modern El Paso to follow the east bank northward, he noted a well-used Indian trail at this ford. Such trails were noted along the river by other early travelers (Simmons 1991:101).

Later, crossings of the river were made at least 20 other fords upstream. If the Río Grande was low enough, as one historian remarked, the river could be crossed three-fourths of the year, and it could be forded virtually anywhere along the Camino Real (Horgan 1954[II]:501). High-water crossings were sometimes made using canoes, rafts, or by floating the wagon beds.

Fray Benavides, in 1630, stated that crossings of the river were possible only “when it carries least water,” and the water level “comes up to the saddle” (Ayer 1965:36–37). Two centuries later, Josiah Gregg (1966[I]:138) observed that the Río Grande was not navigable, and in fact was so shallow “that Indian canoes can scarcely float in it.”

Oñate crossed over the lower of two fords at El Paso where the Río Grande has cut a narrow gorge, called the “Puertas.” On May 4, 1598, about 40 Manso Indians helped the expedition’s caravan, including the sheep, to ford the river. Only here could the wagons, carts, and carriages travel through the narrow river pass. Over the next four days the train traveled only two and one-half leagues (ca. 6.5 miles) over the rough and dangerous trail. The draft animals had to be rested an entire day, and the wagons had to be repaired on another (Moorhead 1958:18–19).

Oñate was not the first Spaniard to cross the Río Grande; several travelers had preceded him. The first was Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, who, with his three companions, were seeking to reach Mexico after being shipwrecked on the Texas coast in 1528. This party reached and forded the river probably somewhere between San Elizario, Texas, and Rincon, New Mexico, in late 1535 (Covey 1983:114–115; Hammond and Rey 1966:217; Hodge 1946:102–104).

More than a century later the Chamuscado-Rodríguez expeditions reached the west bank of the Río Grande below El Paso. They moved up the river and crossed at the first of two fords, about two miles above El Paso, in July 1581 (Sonnichsen 1968:4). This crossing later became known as Vado La Salineta (Horgan 1954[I]:280). The expedition, now on the left or east bank, followed the Río Grande northward to Pueblo country. Four miles above this lower ford was the other, named La Salinero (Hackett and Shelby 1942:cv, 129).

Almost two years later, Espejo’s entrada also reached the river, downstream from El Paso. Probably crossing the river at the lower ford, Espejo followed the east bank of the Río del Norte, as he called it, to northern New Mexico (Hammond and Rey 1966:170, 219).

Both fords were considered dangerous “on account of quicksand and the swiftness of the current, even when the water was low” (Moorhead 1958:112–113). Sometimes, dugout canoes were used for the crossing (Kinnaid 1967:85); in other instances wagons were dismantled and their parts and the goods were floated across the fords. The Rivera expedition of 1726 took a half day to make the crossing above El Paso at one of the fords, probably due to high water (Marshall 1990:174). Often, soaked cargoes had to be unpacked and spread out to dry on the riverbank (Marshall 1990:113). At other times, the cargo was protected by wrapping the goods in painted burlap (Moorhead 1957:18).

Trader Josiah Gregg (1966[II]:75–76) described a crossing his caravan had to make at La Salinero, the upper El Paso ford, in September 1839:

On the 12th of September we reached the usual ford of the Rio del Norte, six miles above El Paso; but the river being somewhat flushed we found it impossible to cross over with our wagons. . . . But as we could neither swim our wagons and merchandise, nor very comfortably wait for the falling of the waters, our only alternative was to unload the vehicles, and ferry the goods over in a little “dug-out” about thirty feet long and two feet wide, of which we were fortunate enough to obtain possession.

We succeeded in finding a place shallow enough to haul our empty wagons across: but for this good fortune we should have been under the necessity of taking them to pieces (as I had before done), and of ferrying them on the “small craft” before mentioned. Half of a wagon may thus be crossed at a time, by carefully balancing it upon the canoe, yet there is of course no little danger of capsizing during the passage.

This river even when fordable often occasions a great deal of trouble, being, like the Arkansas, embarrassed with many quicksand mires. In some places, if a wagon is permitted to stop in the river but for a moment, it sinks to the very body. Instances have occurred where it became necessary not only to drag out the mules by the ears and to carry out the loading package by package, but to haul out the wagon piece by piece—wheel by wheel.

At the upper crossing, at least in 1846, one could continue to follow the river’s east bank, via a road across “rocky, broken country to a considerable elevation,” then descend to the lower ford, cross, and enter the town of El Paso. The author of this description, Frederick Wislizenus (1969:39–40), chose to use the upper ford, which was crossed easily, as the river was low.

Upriver from La Salinero, the next crossing, at least later on, was located 15 miles downriver from Las Cruces. This location, which became known simply as Vado, was not an important ford in the colonial period (Pearce 1965:20).

There was another ford, upriver, opposite the subsequent location of Fort Fillmore, near or at Brazito. This place, an important *paraje* on the road, was named for the “little arm, or tributary” of the Río Grande (Horgan 1954[II]:822; Pearce 1965:20, 59). Just to the north at Mesilla was another crossing, important in the nineteenth century (Horgan 1954[II]:831).

About 23 miles upriver was the San Diego ford, another ford dating to the nineteenth century or perhaps earlier (Horgan 1954[II]:787). Boundary Commissioner John Bartlett (1965[I]:167) crossed here on April 27, 1851, and referred to it as “the old fording place.” He described crossing the Río Grande with his men: “In fording the river, one of the wagons, in consequences of diverging a little from the proper course, got into a quicksand, and was near being lost.”

Farther north, the Valverde ford was frequently used in the mid-1800s and probably earlier. This was also the site of a favorite *paraje* and was used by Oñate and many later travelers along the Camino Real (Moorhead 1958:23, 107). A grove of cottonwoods, good grass, and the ford made this an excellent camping spot. An early nineteenth-century ranch, U.S. Army garrison, and later settlement were situated here, until floods and a shift in the river channel caused their abandonment (Abert 1962:120; Frazer 1981:33; Marshall and Walt 1984:286–287; Moorhead 1958:111, 164–167).

The Socorro ford, some 25 miles upriver, was used by Oñate, who crossed to the Piro pueblo on the west bank of the Río Grande (Simmons 1991:106). Otermín, leading the Spanish refugees and their Indian allies south in the fall of 1680, stopped here to regroup and rest before pushing on to El Paso (Hammond 1953[I]:228–229). Lafora saw the ruins of this village from across the river in 1766 but did not cross over (Kinnaird 1967:88). From a mile above Socorro, but on the east bank, Lieutenant Abert checked two possible fording sites in an attempt to cross over to the new Spanish settlement of Socorro, but concluded that he and his men and their provisions and bedding would

have gotten wet. Subsequently, Abert (1962:120–121) found a “good crossing a short distance above the town. . . .”

Only a few miles north of the Socorro ford was the Parida *vado* commonly used in the nineteenth century. A few ranches, comprising a settlement of the same name, were located on the high, east bank of the river at this crossing (Marshall and Walt 1984:289–290). When Thomas Falconer and others forded the river at this location on October 26, 1841, he wrote the water was “about two feet deep, the greater number of our party wading through it” (1963:95). A county bridge was constructed here in the early part of the twentieth century.

Although there were minor crossings on the Río Grande from Lemitar to the Peralta area, such as those at Lemitar-Sabino, Belen-Tomé, and Valencia-Los Lunas, the next significant ford was at Isleta Pueblo (Browne 1973:59; Scurlock 1990:5–6, 29, 33). This pueblo, located on a rise on the west side of the Río Grande, derived its name from the fact that the river, when in flood, would also flow through an old channel to the west of the village (Adams and Chávez 1956:202, 207). Various Anglo travelers crossed the main river channel here in the mid-1800s, including Abert (1962:99) in 1846; Lieutenant A. W. Whipple (Foreman 1941:116) in 1853, and Samuel W. Cozzens (1988:274–275) in 1859. Cozzens (1988:275) described this ford as follows:

Its bottom is nothing less than a mass of quicksand; and as we had been informed that the ford here is hazardous and very uncertain it was with no enviable feeling that we looked at the muddy, turbid water, and realized the difficulties we might encounter in getting our mules and heavily-laden wagon safely across the stream and up the steep bank on the opposite side.

Perhaps the second busiest ford (the lower El Paso ford probably ranking first) was the Barelas crossing three miles downriver from Albuquerque. Here, southbound trader caravans and military trains would cross from the main branch of the Camino Real along the river’s east side to avoid the deep sand found from here to Isleta. Wagon parties traveling upriver might avoid the stretch by crossing at this pueblo or farther south, then using the Barelas ford back to the left bank. This was especially the case in the 1830s–1860s when heavily loaded Santa Fe Trail wagons and U.S. military trains used the road. Local residents used dugouts and rafts to cross here during this period as well (Scurlock 1988). When Lieutenant Emory crossed at Barelas in September 1846, he noted “the deepest part of the river was just up to the hub of the wheels” (Calvin 1968:79). The bottom of the crossing was sometimes referred to as “quicksand” and the channel frequently shifted with floods (Foreman 1941:119; McNitt 1964:153).

Upriver there were fords of lesser importance to caravans at Bernalillo, Santa Ana Pueblo (after the early 1800s), at the confluence with the Jemez River, at San Felipe, Santo Domingo, and Cochiti. Rafts were used to cross the river at San Felipe in the late 1600s (Strong 1979a:392). Footbridges existed at San Felipe and Cochiti in the mid to late 1800s and possibly earlier (Jones 1979:143–144; Lange 1959:57–60).

SPANNING THE RIVER: CAMINO REAL BRIDGES

Because of the unpredictability of floods and the changing conditions of fords, various bridges were built over the Río Grande. The earliest bridges across the river were constructed by the Pueblo Indians. These footbridges were planked log frames supported by wicker caissons, filled with stones, clay, and sand and sunk into the river bed. Like the more elaborate Spanish bridges which were built to hold draft animals and wagons in the late 1700s or early 1800s, they were frequently damaged or destroyed by floods. Documented footbridges spanned the river at El Paso and San Felipe (1791) and

Cochiti (Jones 1979:143–144; Lange 1959:57). Belen may have had a bridge over the Río Grande in 1791, but it is not clear if the planned structure was ever built (Jones 1979:144–145; Simmons 1978:46–47).

Although there is no detailed description of how these bridges were constructed, an 1897 account describes a process which was probably similar to that used earlier.

As for these, they had already put one beam from shore to crib & were ready to place the second from first to second crib. These cribs were round or elliptical baskets of large size which had been sunk & pegged into place and loaded with stones. The second great timber was brought by perhaps fourteen to twenty workers in pairs on poles transversely placed. The one end was rested on the near crib. The men then supported it and wading into the river swung it around until the free end was near the second crib. Then with a great and united effort they raised the great timber onto the crib. Two or three men particularly climbed up onto the sides of this & with their shoulders under the timber directed and largely assisted in this heaving into position. It was beautiful to watch. Then men with single stones or trays of stones carried by two men went out and packed the crib full and firmly fixed the end in place. These trays were made of several pieces of poles set lengthwise and wickered together. They were either carried by two men over the newly constructed bridgeway or were more commonly carried in the water just resting at its surface where the benefit of the buoyant water was gained. The disadvantage of the *high* lift at the end would probably make up for much of the advantage gained (Lange 1959:59–60).

In 1797–1798, the first of several more elaborate bridges was constructed at La Salineta ford two miles above El Paso. Cottonwood logs for the superstructure were cut and floated down the Río Grande from the Sabinal area (Bloom 1925:172–174). The logs were tied together to make a large raft on which the 54-man workforce rode until the raft capsized. Eventually the logs reached the ford. This bridge was also supported by caissons, with a bed of crosspoles; it was more than 500 feet long and about 17 feet wide. This bridge was not well constructed, and much of it washed away in a flood that occurred sometime before November 1798 (Jones 1979:145; Simmons 1978). Late in the nineteenth century there was a flat-bed, plank ferry at this site.

The construction of another bridge, one strong enough to support a loaded wagon, was initiated in 1798 at the same site where (possibly) cottonwood timbers were again rafted downriver from Sabinal. Soldiers, civilians, and Indians comprised the 87-man construction crew, which completed the work by October 15, 1800 (Bloom 1925:175; Jones 1979:145). Governor Chacon described the bridge:

[it] consists of eight supports and two bowers, one at the entrance and one at the exit which surrounded by a grove (Alameda) as was ordered, will make a pleasant place for recreation, of which this pueblo is entirely lacking. The cross-poling (*embigado*) which forms the floor is five varas wide and one hundred fifty six long, without including the small bridge of the acequia (SANM, Twitchell no. 1512).

This bridge, too, was soon damaged by a flood, and repairs were made in 1805. This time, timber was cut in the Sierra de la Soledad for use as stringers (Bloom 1925:179). This bridge survived until ca. 1815, when it was washed away by a flood. The following year, a new bridge was planned by the governor, but it was never constructed. Ponderosa pine timber from the Taos Mountains were to be moved by forty yokes of oxen to the river near Taos and then rafted 350 miles to the El Paso ford (Bloom 1925:175; Jones 1979:145). This ended the Spanish attempts to span the Río Grande with bridges large enough to support draft animals, carts, and wagons.

Today, the four-century-old, intertwined legacy of the Camino Real and the Río Grande lives on. Paved roads follow the old branches of the road along the valley, connecting the villages on the banks of the river. Steel and concrete bridges, no longer threatened by floodwaters, are located at or close to many of the old fords. And modern reservoirs have altered the landscape and the river flow (Figure 3.3). But an ever-increasing population and attendant land and water use in the Río Grande basin now threaten the river ecosystem and the remains of the Camino Real. Fortunately, a number of government agencies and private groups are working to restore and/or preserve these valuable resources. Perhaps because of the long-time relationship between the two, if we can preserve one, we will preserve the other. ♣

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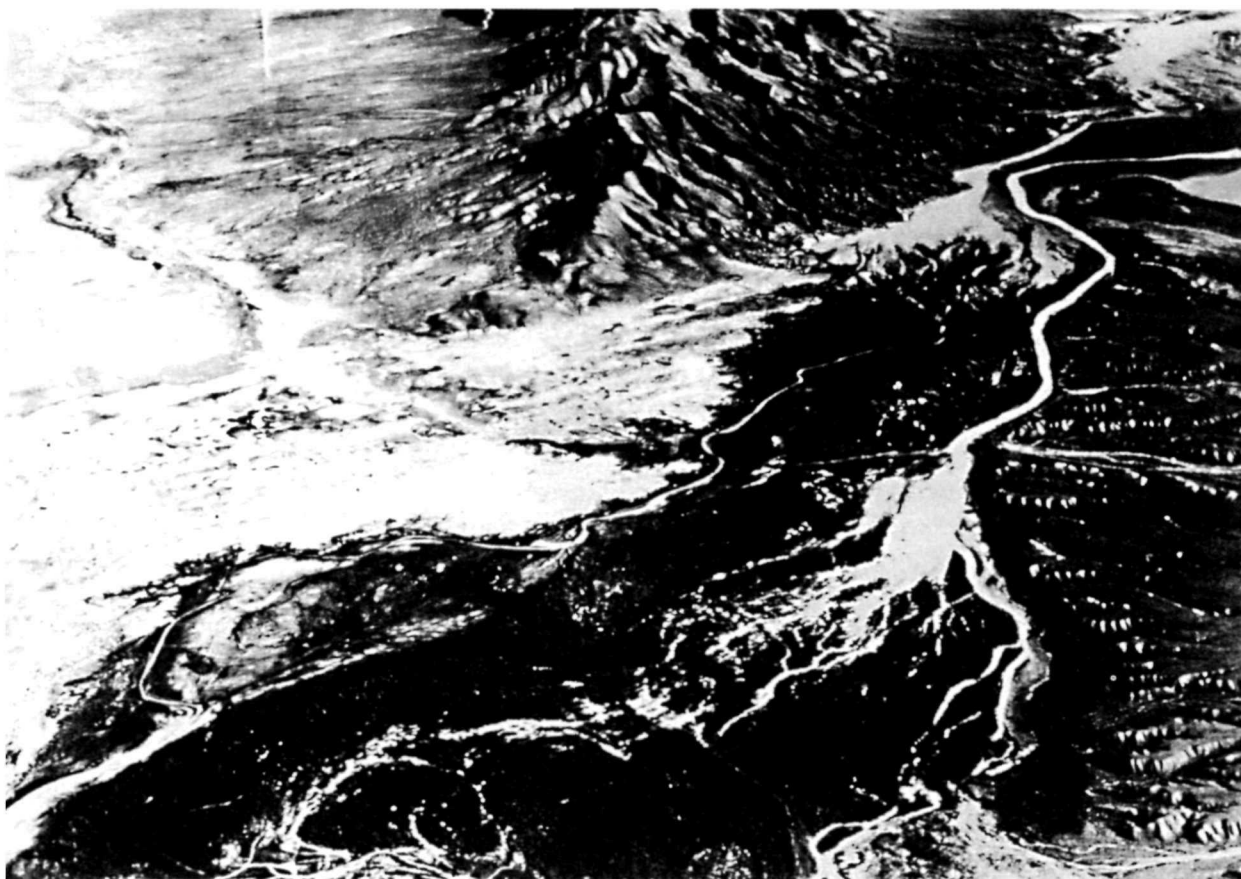


Fig. 3.3

Elephant Butte Dam, built by the U.S. Reclamation Service, makes a lake forty miles long and is one hundred feet deep over Engle Ferry, near old Fort McCrae. Engle Ford and Ferry once served a region more than one hundred miles square. Aerial view of Elephant Butte Reservoir, Rio Grande Historical Collections, NMSU Library.

"Engle Ferry"

Eugene Manlove Rhodes

Engle Ferry is narrow and deep,
The current is strong and the banks are steep;
Teamster and horseman they praise the Lord
For the stony footings of Engle Ford;
Scoured and cleansed of quivering sand,
The safest road on the Rio Grande.
The patient oxen may drink their fill,
With thankful eyes on the farther hill;
Drink, and lean to their yokes again,
Toiling over, with heave and strain,
Tonight, and rest, and the scanty sward
Of the starlit meadows by Engle Ford.

A winding road on either hand,
Between black lava and yellow sand
Between red water and close blue sky,
Leads to the ferry when floods are high.
Chain your wheels with a double hitch,
Skid and learch on the last steep pitch,
Slide on the ferry and close the gates,
Block your wagons—and trust the fates!

Clouds brood low on the sultry air,
Stabbing the gorges with lightning flare;
Angry echoes from hill to hill
Mutter and clamor and threaten still;
The pulleys whine to the cables strain—
But Engle Ferry is crossed again!

Engle Ferry is lost and gone, Engle Ford and Ferry.
The owl hoots over Babylon,
Deep over Ur the sand is blown,
Carthage City is sown with salt,
And never again will wagons halt
At Engle Ford and Ferry.
Never again will moon or star
Kiss the hills where the campfires are:
Never again beneath the sun
Glance and glitter and lance and gun,
Drum and bugle and flag and sword,
And soldiers splashing through Engle Ford.

The passionless waters are deep and still
On golden mesa and dreaming hill;
Never again shall echoes call
To plunging ferry and lava wall.
Ditches may reach to the thirsty plain,
Roads may wander through fields of grain,
Valleys blossom with cities strange—
But Engle Ferry will never change!
Silence and darkness keep watch and ward
On Engle Ferry and Engle Ford.

Mexico City to Santa Fe

Spanish Pioneers on the Camino Real, 1693–1694

José Antonio Esquibel



IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS of June 23, 1694, a remarkable group of Spanish pioneer families began to strike their camp along the Camino Real for the last time in their nine-month journey from Mexico City to Santa Fe. The long-awaited day had arrived. With eagerness the wagons were loaded, mules and horses made ready, and families gathered together to complete the final leg of their sojourn to a distant frontier town in a hostile region of the Spanish realm. Approximately 217 colonists (88 children, 59 women, and 70 men) traveled with anticipation and excitement on the dry and dusty road of the Camino Real which paralleled the Santa Fe River in a northeasterly direction (Esquibel 1994:4). Directly ahead lay their destination, the Villa de Santa Fe, nestled in the foothills of the splendid Sangre de Cristo mountain range.

The colonists entered Santa Fe at 9:00 A.M. and were greeted enthusiastically by the residents of the town who had anxiously been waiting six months for reinforcements to help maintain the Spanish restoration of New Mexico (Espinosa 1942:188). For the first time, the newcomers saw the humble adobe structures, recently restored, which would become their dwellings, and gazed into the happy faces of those citizens who would be their neighbors, compadres, and even future in-laws. This was undoubtedly a momentous occasion, particularly since many of the colonists had waited over a year for this event. The weary travelers had endured a trek of nearly 1,500 miles, the largest group of people to traverse the entire length of the Camino Real from Mexico City to Santa Fe.

The Camino Real was the arterial road connecting the urban centers of Nueva España (New Spain) with the northern frontier regions of Spanish colonization. Forged over nearly eight decades of the sixteenth century by groups of individuals motivated by the spirit of exploration and the promise of fortune in service to the royal crown, the Camino Real was extended to its full northern length with the establishment of a Spanish colony in New Mexico under the leadership of don Juan de Oñate in the latter months of 1598. For the next eighty-two years the Camino Real was the primary route linking the remote realm of New Mexico with the southern realms until the northernmost section was lost with the Pueblo Indian Revolt of August 1680, resulting in the retreat of the Spanish citizens and their Indian allies to the region of El Paso del Norte. During the next decade, attempts to regain control of New Mexico were fruitless, and many former residents began to disperse into the

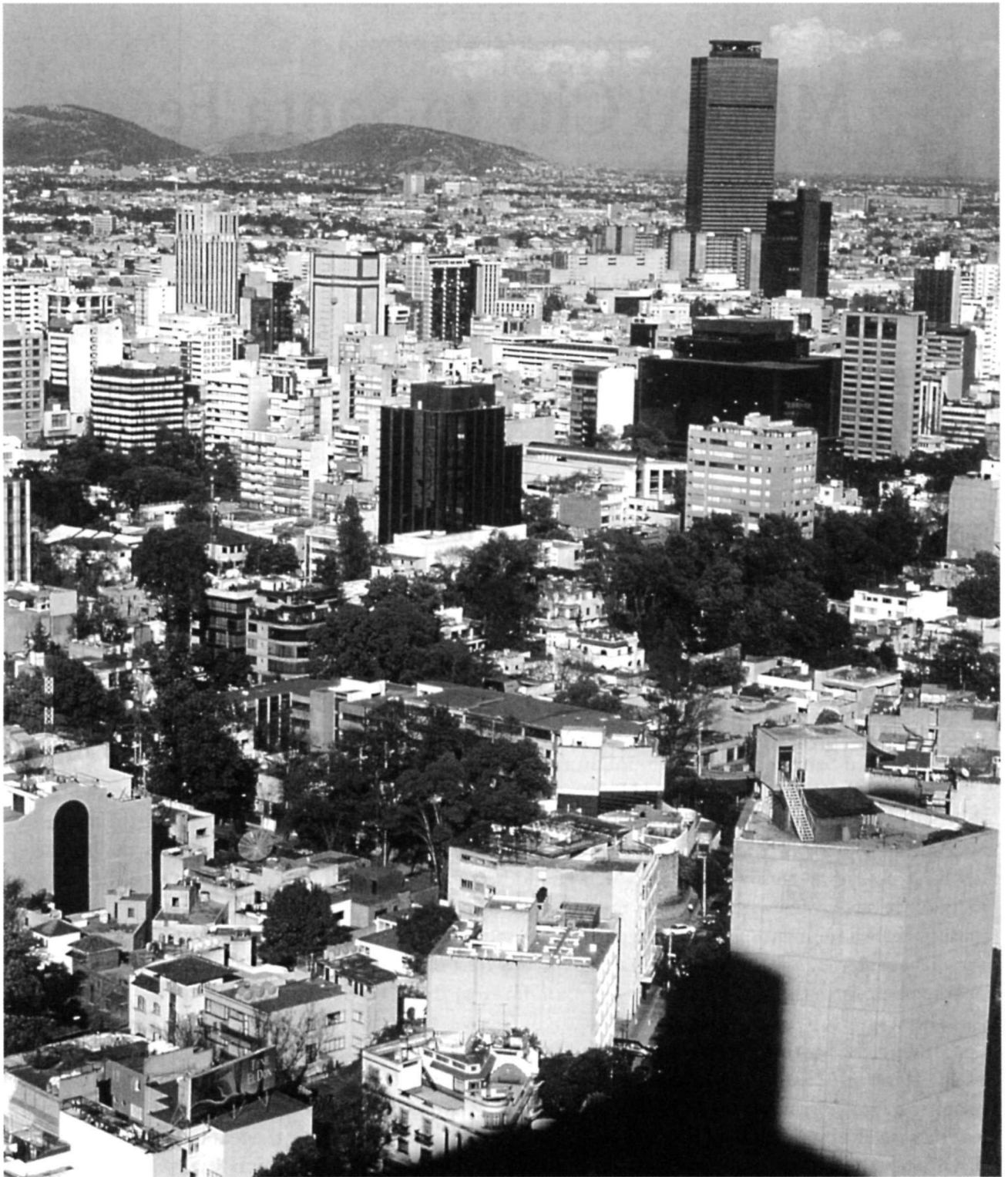


Fig. 4.1

Modern-day view of Mexico City, the heart of Spanish culture in New Spain during the colonial era, and today one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world. Photo Christine Preston.

neighboring provinces of Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Galicia.

In February 1691 Vargas arrived at El Paso del Norte to assume governorship of New Mexico as approved by the viceroy of Nueva España, don Gaspar de la Cerda Sandoval, Conde de Galve. Vargas's career as governor of New Mexico clearly illustrates his exemplary talents as a military leader and governing administrator. A complex man of determination and persistence, Vargas overcame numerous obstacles in the effort to regain New Mexico and return the exiled colonists to their lost towns and lands. Vargas organized and led an expedition into the hostile territory of New Mexico from August through October 1692. His efforts yielded the allegiance of several key Pueblo leaders and villages, resulting in the most significant accomplishment of his career and a turning point in the history of New Mexico and the Camino Real (Kessell and Hendricks 1992:359–467).

New Mexico was restored to the crown and Santa Fe was once again occupied by Spanish citizens. Word of this extraordinary event was dispatched on October 16, 1692, from Santa Fe and sent by courier to El Paso and then on to Mexico City. The courier was don Diego Varela de Losada, general adjunct of New Mexico, who traveled the length of the Camino Real and delivered the dispatches at the viceregal palace in Mexico City on November 21, 1692. The reaction of the viceroy and the general junta, the governing body of Nueva España, was one of great appreciation and praise for Vargas (Kessell and Hendricks 1992:472–473, 508).

The news of the restoration of New Mexico spread throughout Mexico City and beyond, capturing the imagination of the citizens who initiated community fiestas to celebrate this Spanish victory. The spirit of the residents of Mexico City had been dampened by two very harsh years marked by devastating floods, which had caused a serious shortage of food.¹ While the population of Mexico City was celebrating Vargas's triumph, Vargas himself was contending with the very real problem of recruiting colonists if New Mexico was to be held and maintained for the Crown and not lost as a result of another Indian uprising. In generous support of this endeavor, the viceroy offered assistance from the Crown. In addition to money from the royal treasury to recruit families from the northern provinces of Nueva Galicia and Nueva Vizcaya, the viceroy initiated recruitment in the urban areas of Nueva España, principally Mexico City and Puebla de los Ángeles. A decree from the viceroy was read publicly in each of the plazas of Mexico City, announcing that royal assistance would be provided for any Spanish family that volunteered in the noble purpose of resettling New Mexico and that lands and other privileges would be granted in the name of the king by Governor Vargas (Kessell et al. 1995:102–105, 122).

In the early months of 1693, two men received royal commissions from the viceroy to recruit families and to organize and lead the New Mexico colonizing expedition. Fray Francisco Farfán had served in New Mexico as the assistant guardian of the convento of Santa Fe and escaped the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. With other New Mexico residents he fled to El Paso, where he continued to serve until 1684. A native of Cadiz, Spain, and born around 1643, Farfán had taken the habit of San Francisco at Mexico City on July 7, 1661. At the time of his royal appointment in 1693, he was procurator in Mexico City. Very little credit has been given to this man for his outstanding efforts in successfully organizing prospective colonists and delivering them to New Mexico.

The other organizer was Mexico City native Captain Cristóbal de Velasco, an officer under Governor Vargas's command who had been exiled to New Mexico in 1677 with a sentence to serve six years of military duty. Velasco married in New Mexico and survived the 1680 Pueblo Revolt. With his wife and child he resided at El Paso until 1692 when he left to make a better living in the province of Sonora. By early 1693, however, he was in Mexico City and received a royal appointment as leader and commissary of the New Mexico colonizing expedition (Chávez 1975:309; Kessell and Hendricks 1992:505, n. 2; Kessell et al. 1995:227–228, 254, 265).

Velasco and Farfán actively sought out families: attracting heads of households, enlisting them, and providing assistance in preparation to leave Mexico City. At the end of March 1693, more than seventy families had expressed serious interest in resettling New Mexico, but many had not fully enlisted because the royal authorities neglected to specify the amount of financial assistance to be provided by the Crown to cover the expenses of transportation and relocation. A decree by the viceroy dated April 11, 1693, was read at around two o'clock in the afternoon in the plaza mayor of Mexico City. War drums sounded as many citizens gathered to listen to the town crier read the order in a booming voice so that all would hear. The viceroy's decree promised 300 pesos to each family that would travel to New Mexico, transported in wagons on the Camino Real at the royal treasury's expense. In New Mexico, Governor Vargas would provide aid until they were able to sustain themselves, and they would be granted all honors, privileges, and favors as settlers, including lands granted to them in the name of the king (Kessell et al. 1995:227, 229).

Official documents provide extremely little information about the personal reasons that motivated families to enlist as frontier settlers and leave their familiar urban lifestyle behind. Certainly these reasons were varied, and any speculation is assisted by understanding the nature of the families who enlisted. Governor Vargas's request to the viceroy for colonists specifically stated the need to recruit craftsmen. In particular he mentioned gunsmiths, carpenters, and barbers (Kessell and Hendricks 1992:461). The viceroy's request at Mexico City for colonizers was not aimed at the aristocratic families of Nueva España, and his request very purposefully excluded racially mixed families as well as Indians, Africans, and Filipinos. The viceroy's intent was to recruit *españoles*, people of Spanish background, who were married legitimately within the church and of good character. The responding families were those of moderate means, nonaristocratic, and law-abiding citizens. A look at the occupations of the men who enlisted with their families reveals a variety of trades that would be especially practical on the frontier: assayer, baker, blacksmith, brickmason, cabinetmaker, carpenter, cartwright, chandler, cobbler, coppersmith, cutler, miller, painter, stonemason, tailor, and weaver (Esquibel 1994:19–28). Although these were honorable and respected trades, opportunities for social mobility and ownership of land were very limited in the viceregal capital and other parts of Nueva España. Honor and status were highly valued in seventeenth-century Spanish society, and the chance to obtain the honors, privileges, and favors of the lower nobility certainly influenced many families to consider risking the journey north to settle in a distant and hostile region.

In order to be accepted as a colonizing family, couples were required to prove they were married in the Catholic faith. Local church records were consulted and for many couples, particularly those married outside Mexico City, certificates of marriage were obtained as proof. Farfán adamantly insisted that only married couples be allowed to enlist as colonists; in his opinion no single men should be allowed to go as settlers on this colonizing expedition (Espinosa 1942:124; Kessell et al. 1995:253). In the end, five single men were granted permission by the viceroy to join the expedition, three of whom were French expatriates given their freedom by the Spanish Crown on the condition that they settle on the northern frontier.

By mid-July 1693, Farfán compiled a list of 61 families and two single men, 275 individuals in all, for royal officials (Kessell et al. 1995:245–249; Biblioteca Nacional de México, legajo 4, pt. 5). Several of these families were closely related. As was a common occurrence in the colonization of the New World, families were very likely to travel with close relatives. This kind of familiar support was a significant contributing factor to the success of the colonizing expedition to Santa Fe. When the word spread about the need for colonists in New Mexico, many families must have discussed the possibility of living as pioneers on the northern frontier, weighing the advantages and disadvantages

of leaving their familiar environment. Yet, a kinship group could acquire a considerable amount of land, improve its social status, and perhaps make a better living with trade skills that were more in demand on the frontier. An analysis of the families that volunteered to travel to New Mexico reveals nine distinct kinship groups representing nearly half of the total number of recruited colonials (Esquibel 1994:10–11).²

Another group attracted by the call for colonists consisted of numerous single men who had made contact with Velasco and Farfán. Several registered their intent to go to New Mexico and then actively sought women who would be willing to marry them and live as pioneer settlers on the frontier. As many as thirteen couples intending to go to New Mexico were married between May 10 and September 8, 1693, constituting approximately 11% of the people in the colonizing expedition. In fact, fray Farfán was the officiating priest for the marriage of six of the thirteen couples with Captain Velasco as the witness (Esquibel and Colligan n.d.). For these newlywed couples who had yet to establish a family, the prospect of obtaining land grants and improving their social status held more promise than the somewhat limiting lifestyle available in the urban setting of Mexico City.

There were other single men whose attempts to find wives failed. One such case involved Juan Cristóbal de Losada, a companion of don José del Valle, both single men when they contacted the recruiters. Losada was assigned the allotted subsidy of 300 pesos but he needed a wife before he could enlist as a colonist. He promised to marry a woman named Rosa, who served in the household of Valle, on condition that she go to New Mexico with him. Rosa adamantly refused to leave Mexico City. No marriage took place, and Losada could not find another prospective bride. He lost his subsidy and was not able to travel with the colonizing expedition. Losada, a rather determined individual, eventually turned up in New Mexico by 1695 as a soldier stationed at the Presidio of Santa Fe, where he married a native New Mexico woman (Esquibel 1994:5; Esquibel and Colligan n.d.; Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe [AASF], *Diligencias Matrimoniales*, January 13, 1695, no. 5, Santa Fe). Valle himself had some measure of difficulty getting married. He recorded banns of matrimony with María de Carvajal on May 17, 1693, but a marriage never took place, as he later recorded banns with Ana de Rivera, whom he married on June 29, 1693. Valle and Rivera completed the trip to New Mexico.

Royal authorities expected the colonizing expedition to leave Mexico City as early as May 1693, and concern was voiced about the approach of spring rains that would fill streams and make road conditions difficult for travel. Yet, delay after delay postponed the departure of the colonizers. Negotiations with wagon owners were particularly problematic. Wagons were to be the primary mode of transporting the colonists, and the initial plan was to place sixteen colonists per wagon. Royal officials offered a lower price for use of the wagons than wagon owners were willing to accept. Also, wagon owners refused to allow the vehicles to go any further than El Paso for fear of losing them to hostile Indians. Eventually, an agreement was reached.

Another problem concerned the forms in which the colonists would receive their allotted subsidy for provisions. Royal officials preferred to give the allotment of 300 pesos in the form of clothing and other items, but the colonists complained and requested their allotments in cash. Through the mediation efforts of fray Farfán an agreement was reached with royal officials and cash was distributed to each family (Kessell et al. 1995:231–232).

The assurance of transportation and the subsidy for provisions were critical issues for the families intending to go to New Mexico. The delays created additional problems for the organizers of the expedition and the prospective colonists. Some families had traveled from outside Mexico City and had no place to stay while waiting for the expedition to begin its northward journey. To address this need, and to ensure that the majority of prospective colonists held to their intention, a special camp



Fig. 4.2

Plaza de Guadalupe, Mexico City. This is the site where the colonists were encamped while preparing for their journey to New Mexico in the spring and summer of 1693. Photo Christine Preston.

was set up just outside Mexico City in an area known as Guadalupe where all enlisted families were expected to reside until the day of departure. Establishing the encampment served an important purpose in bringing the families together in preparation for their proposed 122-day journey. The goal was for the colonists to arrive at El Paso in October 1693 in time to enter New Mexico with the other settlers organized by Governor Vargas, although that deadline was not met.

By September 1693, as many as thirteen families had canceled their intention to go to New Mexico, but several new families had enlisted, so a muster roll made just days before the group left Mexico City in mid September counted 234 individuals (Kessell et al. 1995:292). The final days passed, undoubtedly with extreme anticipation, and the day of departure arrived. The colonists must have felt many emotions as they boarded the mule-drawn wagons and began their journey on the Camino Real, leaving behind relatives, compadres, and friends. Certainly, they experienced any combination of excitement, anxiety, sadness, hopefulness, ambivalence, and cheerfulness.

Under the leadership of Captain Cristóbal de Velasco and fray Francisco Farfán, 235 individuals consisting of 67 families and one single man are known to have left Mexico City (Esquibel 1994:10). The route north was to follow the Camino Real to Querétaro, Zacatecas, Cuernavaca, the outpost of El Gallo, Parral, El Paso del Norte, and finally Santa Fe. On the Camino Real the colonists became accustomed to a mobile lifestyle that was at times unpredictable, sharply contrasting with the almost sedentary and predictable character of their former urban lifestyle. Nonetheless, they found consolation in establishing a daily routine that was to become all too familiar over the course of the nine-month journey. The colonists slept in tents and wagons for approximately 283 consecutive nights, shared meals and belongings, prayed together, had quarrels, attended mass, told stories, recounted past events, sang songs, rejoiced at births and mourned at burials, took precautions against

attacks, petitioned patron saints for protection, suffered from lack of provisions, mended broken wagon wheels, sewed torn clothing, comforted children, milked cows and goats, slaughtered livestock, complained about the weather when it was bad and praised God when it was favorable, and all the while they wondered with anticipation about the new life they would have in New Mexico.

Unfortunately, no personal records documenting details of the journey to New Mexico on the Camino Real have come to light. If personal journals were kept, they have long since disappeared or lay buried among voluminous uncataloged archival documents. Many of the colonists were literate and must have written letters to family and friends in Nueva España. Letters to royal officials in Mexico City were dispatched regularly, and we can presume that the dispatchers carried personal mail as well. Such letters would have provided very personal accounts of life on the Camino Real. Nonetheless, fragments of information scattered throughout documents in various archives can be pieced together to provide a sketchy outline of some of the events that occurred along the Camino Real. The first of these events happened at El Puesto de Collosillas near the city of Querétaro where 32-year-old María López de Arteaga, wife of Manuel González Vallejo, went into labor. Although married for over two years, this couple had not yet had any children. María was very likely assisted by other women of the expedition, but she experienced complications in her delivery beyond the skills of a midwife. She gave birth to a son at the cost of her life. Her death is the first of several recorded tragedies of this colonizing group. The routine of the journey was interrupted as preparations were made for her burial. Her body was transported to the church of San Francisco in the city of Querétaro where she was interred. A grieving widower, Manuel González Vallejo must have received substantial support from his fellow colonists, as he decided to remain with the expedition and is known to have completed the trip with his infant son, and an eight-year-old daughter from a previous marriage. Manuel married a third time and became the progenitor of the large Vallejo family of New Mexico (Chávez 1975:303; Esquibel and Colligan n.d.; AASF, Diligencias Matrimoniales, 1694, October 22, no. 19, Santa Fe).

*Fig. 4.3
Church at Querétaro,
Mexico. The colonists
passed through
Querétaro in late
September 1693; one
of their members,
María López de Arteaga,
was buried there after
dying in childbirth.
Photo Christine Preston.*



As many as ten women were pregnant when the expedition left Mexico City, and eight women appear to have given birth between September 3 and November 16, 1693 (Esquibel and Colligan n.d.). The newborns were children of the Camino Real, born into caring families without homes, suckling at their mothers' breasts as the wheels of the wagons turned with countless revolutions on the slow journey northward. By mid November, nearly sixty days after leaving Mexico City, the colonizing expedition arrived at La Laguna near the city of Zacatecas, where they set up camp and took an accounting of their numbers and their provisions. The muster roll of the colonists made at La Laguna on November 16 reveals that sixteen individuals had deserted the expedition and three single men had joined the group. Four families and two young men had fled before reaching Zacatecas. For some compelling reasons, perhaps a combination of the hardships of traveling and serious longings for home, they were no longer attracted to the prospects of life on the frontier (Kessell et al. 1995:310–314). Their decision to desert placed them at risk of exile to the Philippines to perform labor without pay as decreed by royal officials in Mexico City. One of the families, that of Pedro de Aguilera and Juana de Torres, belonged to the largest kinship group of the expedition, but even this was not enough consolation for them to continue onward. They returned to Mexico City and must have been successful in justifying their desertion to royal officials since Pedro and Juana remained as residents of Mexico City and were still having children there as late as August 1706 (Esquibel 1994:8; Esquibel and Colligan n.d.).

While they were encamped at La Laguna, provisions were gathered from the Zacatecas area in preparation for continuing the expedition. It was clear that this group of colonists would not arrive at El Paso del Norte in time to participate in Governor Vargas's recolonization of New Mexico when he would lead families into Santa Fe as originally planned. The colonizing expedition was already one month behind schedule, not fully realizing they would be on the Camino Real for another seven months. The group proceeded slowly and experienced problems with the wagons and mules. At a place called Las Cruces, 22-year-old José Núñez was killed when a wagon fell on him, most likely while he was attempting repairs. Once again the colonists buried one of their own. His 12-year-old wife, Gertrudis de Herrera Sandoval, was comforted in her grief by her parents who were members of the expedition and with whom she completed the journey to New Mexico (Chávez 1975:244; Esquibel and Colligan n.d.; AASF, *Diligencias Matrimoniales*, 1695, April 22, no. 1, Santa Cruz).

In the latter part of December 1693, the expedition had reached the outpost of El Gallo where Francisca Antonia Morales de Guíjosa, wife of Antonio de Moya, gave birth to their first child, María Francisca de Moya. As María Francisca grew up, she must have heard her parents recount the story of their journey on the Camino Real and the circumstances of her birth while traveling to New Mexico. When María Francisca was married at Santa Fe in 1709 she identified her birthplace as El Camino, Presidio del Gallo (AASF, *Diligencias Matrimoniales*, 1709, September 7, no. 5, Santa Fe).

By the time the colonists reached Cerro Gordo in the last days of December, there was a need for more mules. In addition, Captain Cristóbal de Velasco was ill and no longer able to lead the expedition. In his place, at the request of fray Farfán, expedition member Miguel García de la Riva was commissioned by Governor Vargas as captain and squadron leader of the expedition. The group remained encamped at Cerro Gordo where fray Farfán set pen to paper and dispatched letters north to Governor Vargas and south to Mexico City with information about the condition of the expedition and an account of all the families (Espinosa 1942:166–167). Farfán expressed his frustration with the families, stating that they were refusing to obey orders. In fact, a small group of families elected to travel ahead of the main expedition. Was this an indication of the patience of the group wearing thin, or of conflict between families, or conflict between fray Farfán and the families? In any case, fray Farfán credited Miguel García de la Riva with the ability to keep the families from abandoning the

expedition and praised his skills and leadership (Kessell et al. 1998:102–104). The death of José Núñez was noted, and other than the absence of Velasco there had been no additional desertions or deaths. Trouble with mules caused fray Farfán to send expedition member Tomás de Hita to purchase some mules for the wagons. The expedition continued northward and Hita never returned. His wife, Antonia Gutiérrez, and son Miguel very likely feared the worst but continued their journey on the Camino Real. They settled in New Mexico without any word from Hita or his whereabouts. It was not until 1694 that Antonia received confirmation of her husband's death. According to a letter sent by fray Augustín de Coca, who had accompanied the colonists and then returned to Mexico City, Hita found mules at a rancho in the vicinity of Zacatecas. A conflict had arisen with a mulatto man, who stabbed Hita to death in a jealous rage over the mulatto's wife. Antonia lived as a widow until 1697 when she married Juan de Archibeque, one of the Frenchmen who accompanied the colonists to New Mexico (Chávez 1975:129; Diligencias Matrimoniales, 1697, no. 13, Santa Fe).

Behind schedule and resolutely overcoming the hardships presented by traveling and living on the Camino Real, this determined group of colonists maintained a steadfast commitment to successfully completing the expedition. Leaving Cerro Gordo in January 1694, fray Farfán led his weathered pilgrims northward. The group continued on the Camino Real to Parral and then the Jesuit hacienda of Tabalopa, located north of present-day Chihuahua, where they arrived by March 6, 1694, and set up camp for the remainder of the month. Farfán wrote to Governor Vargas about the need for grain and mules, and requested a military escort from El Paso to Santa Fe. The trip had been difficult in the previous months, and the colonists would not be able to continue traveling without supplies waiting for them at El Paso. Vargas responded favorably, promising to provide the supplies and at least fourteen mules (Espinosa 1942:178).

In April, the colonists had pushed onward to the post of Ojo Caliente, near Carrizal, Nueva Vizcaya. It was here that Catalina de los Ángeles Collacos, wife of Juan Manuel Martínez de Cervantes, was buried after she died in childbirth. This couple had married at Mexico City on June 21, 1693, and were the only household to travel with a personal servant. Catalina had begun the northward journey early in her pregnancy, and life on the road did not present the best conditions for a woman carrying a child. Nonetheless, she and her husband probably had hopes of raising a family and held aspirations of a successful frontier lifestyle. Although aware of the risks involved in the colonizing venture, particularly on a hostile frontier, they could not predict death would come so soon to steal their hopes and aspirations. Available records indicate their child did not survive and was very likely buried with its mother. Not dissuaded, although grievously affected, Juan Manuel continued the journey, and as with most people of his time he probably accepted the death of his wife and child as God's will, very likely finding consolation in his faith and prayers as well as in support from his fellow travelers. Juan Manuel and his servant, Cecilia de la Cruz, completed the journey to New Mexico, where he was married to expedition member María Guadalupe Navarro y González de Vargas in 1696 (Chávez 1975:226–227; Esquibel and Colligan n.d.; AASF Diligencias Matrimoniales, 1696, July 8, no. 8, Santa Cruz).

The expedition moved onward, drawing nearer to the southern boundary of the realm of New Mexico. By late April or early May, the group had reached the jurisdiction of El Paso del Norte and crossed the waters of the Río Grande. They proceeded north to the post of San Diego, the previously arranged site where additional mules and wagons of maize would be waiting. The colonists then crossed the bleak and deserty terrain commonly referred to as “la Jornada del Muerto,” the Journey of Death, to a place known as Fray Cristóbal. From here they maintained a steady pace on the Camino Real, paralleling the river towards the region of Pueblo villages. Distant blue mountains lined the eastern and western horizons. By mid June the group had passed the sharply rising Sandia Mountains



Fig. 4.4

Ruins at Ojo Caliente, one of the last ouposts before reaching El Paso del Norte. The Mexico City colonists arrived at Ojo Caliente in April 1694 and reached El Paso shortly thereafter. Today Ojo Caliente has a feeling of great desolation, heat and abandonment—the spring is dry, the pool empty and covered with a thin layer of grass. Photo Christine Preston.

to the east and began the gradual ascent towards Santa Fe. On June 22, 1693, the colonists topped La Bajada hill and caught their first sight of Santa Fe cradled within the foothills of the magnificent Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Governor Vargas received the news of their approach and rode out to meet them and to confer with fray Farfán. At Vargas's orders, arrangements had already been made to house the newcomers in the dwellings of Santa Fe (Espinosa 1942:188).

After one last night on the Camino Real, the morning could not come soon enough. The majority of the colonists had given a year of their lives to accomplish the goal of settling in Santa Fe. As true pioneers they endured the difficult conditions of living on the Camino Real, successfully dealt with unanticipated problems, and shared an unforgettable adventure. In the early morning hours of June 23 the colonists ate their last meal on the road, broke camp, and completed their arduous nine-month journey when they entered Santa Fe at 9:00 A.M. (Espinosa 1942:188). One remarkable point is the fact that 88 children, ages infant through 15, constituting 40% of the colonists, completed the Camino Real journey (Esquibel 1994:10, 14, Table 3).

A variety of factors contributed to the success of this colonizing expedition. The most important were the patronage of the viceroy, financial support from the royal treasury, the careful and well-organized recruitment process, the leadership ability of fray Farfán, friendships that existed among several families prior to the formation of the expedition, kinship relations by blood and marriage, and the unfaltering commitment by the majority of the families who left Mexico City. The experience of living on the Camino Real created bonds of friendship among many of the families, which were strengthened in New Mexico by *compadrazgo* relations and marriage alliances. As a result, the existing kinship groups became larger and more complex as new kinship affinities were formed in the early decades of the eighteenth century (Esquibel 1994:29–37).

The colonists resided at Santa Fe, where they reestablished their lives and livelihoods. They quickly integrated themselves into the social, economic, religious, and political affairs of New Mexico and began to influence the cultural milieu. Ten months after their arrival in Santa Fe, plans to found a settlement for these families from Nueva España were in the final stages. The site chosen was not only strategic, it proved to be instrumental in the expansion of Spanish settlements in northern New Mexico. The location was along the Río Grande about twenty miles north of Santa Fe, in a region occupied by Spanish families prior to the 1680 Pueblo Revolt and known as La Cañada, where water flowed from the Sangre de Cristos to the Río Grande. During the twelve-year absence of the Spanish citizens, Tanos Indians occupied the abandoned dwellings and established a pueblo which was later christened San Lázaro. On March 18, 1695, Governor Vargas issued orders for the Tanos to vacate the pueblo. This occurred without major incident, and the Tanos were dispersed to neighboring pueblos (Espinosa 1942:225).

In mid April the governor prepared a proclamation which was read in the two plazas of Santa Fe on April 19, calling for the families recruited at Mexico City to make themselves ready to travel north with all of their belongings. On April 21, with wagons loaded, the settlers departed from Santa Fe. This short trip must have brought back memories of their drawn-out journey on the Camino Real. Arriving on the following day, the ceremonial founding of the new town took place in front of the chapel which had been constructed by the Indians of San Lázaro Pueblo (Espinosa 1942:226). The town was formally named La Villa Nueva de Santa Cruz de Españoles Mexicanos del Rey Señor Carlos Segundo and would be referred to more commonly as Santa Cruz de la Cañada, or simply Santa Cruz or La Cañada. The term "Españoles Mexicanos" referred to the Spanish families of Nueva España recruited at Mexico City. The reference to Carlos II, King of Spain, acknowledged the founding of the town during his realm.

The land of the town of Santa Cruz was granted to the people in common, and royal grants of land

outside the town, but within its jurisdiction, were given to families in the name of the king by Governor Vargas. The ceremony concluded with the announcement of the duty of the settlers “to defend the place for the Spanish Crown.” All together the people shouted three times: “Long live the King, our Majesty, may God spare him, Señor Don Carlos the Second, King of Spain and all of this New World, and of this new villa which is founded in his royal name with the title of Villa Nueva de los Españoles Mexicanos!” In jubilation, hats were thrown in the air and three salutes were fired (Espinosa 1942:226).

Not all of the colonizers from Nueva España settled at Santa Cruz. As many as sixteen of the families remained as residents of Santa Fe and were identified as such in a 1697 record accounting for the number of cattle distributed to settlers (SANM II:65).

The founding of Santa Cruz was a direct response to fulfilling the viceregal agreement to provide royal land grants to the families recruited at Mexico City. This town was located only a few miles south of the original Spanish settlement of San Gabriel, established by Oñate’s colony in 1599, with the Jemez Mountains rising sharply behind the hills to the west of the Rio Grande and the Sangre de Cristo range sloping gracefully in the east. The founding of Santa Cruz reextended the northern portion of the Camino Real almost to the original length blazed by Oñate’s colonists. The town served as the primary settlement from which many individuals and families began to establish other settlements in northern New Mexico. The villages of Chimayo, El Potrero, Quemado, and Cundillo were the first offshoots. People moving northward throughout the eighteenth century established a series of Spanish settlements: Chama, Rio Arriba de la Soledad, Bosque Grande, La Joya, La Canoa, Embudo, Ojo Caliente, Abiquiu, Chamita, Truchas, Las Trampas, and Chamisal. The now popular and revived traditional Spanish colonial arts of New Mexico were fostered and developed in these frontier areas, and much of New Mexico’s traditional Spanish folklore was preserved by the people of these communities.

Accorded the honors and privileges as frontier settlers, *pobladores*, the colonizing families from Nueva España became the new elite of New Mexico, and many were able to firmly establish themselves among the aristocracy made up of the older, *hidalgo* families of New Mexico. This social status was strengthened by either marriage among the colonizing families or matrimonial alliances with the *hidalgo* families descended from New Mexico’s original *conquistadores* and settlers, as well as by the occupation of important civil and military positions and the acquisition and successful utilization of land, servants, and livestock.

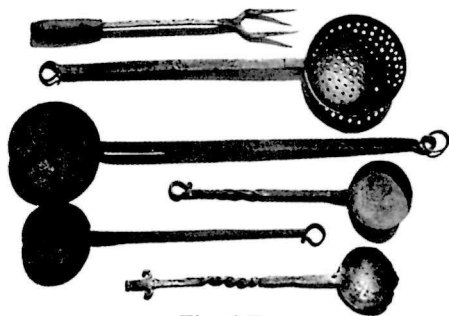


Fig. 4.5
Southwestern colonial spoons,
skimmer, and fork, New Mexico.
Photo Marc Simmons.
Courtesy Museum of
New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.

The Camino Real, extending from Mexico City to Santa Fe, has been recognized as a thoroughfare for transporting goods and providing access for people to reach the Spanish frontier regions. Besides providing a route by which the colonists recruited at Mexico City were able to travel to New Mexico, the Camino Real allowed the colonists to transport the culture of Nueva España to the frontier, resulting in significant contributions to the revitalization of the culture of Spanish colonial New Mexico. The social and cultural influences introduced to the society of Spanish New Mexico by the individuals of this unique colonizing expedition have not been fully recognized nor studied. Influential contributions were made in areas

concerning social customs, religious traditions and expression of faith, commerce, trade skills, education, and very probably art, music, medicine, and folklore.

In the seventeenth century, Mexico City was the cultural center of Nueva España. Its many

churches were architectural testaments to the religiosity of the society based in orthodoxy and expressed with sincere devotion. All aspects of Spanish culture had been fully incorporated into this American society, with some modifications and adaptations based on regional influences. Since few books were published and therefore were not generally available, the culture was primarily oral, and any formal education was usually in regard to the tenets of the catholic doctrine. The New Mexico pioneers recruited at Mexico City transported this culture to the far northern frontier and were responsible for the most significant influences on the society of New Mexico since its founding in 1598. Nearly all the families remained in New Mexico and actively contributed to the society and culture of eighteenth-century New Mexico. Many had numerous descendants by the end of the eighteenth century who modified and adapted the cultural values of Nueva España to the conditions of frontier New Mexico.

Many of the colonists were educated and cultured people who were able to read and write. The father of expedition member José Bernardo de Mascareñas appears in Mexico City church records with the title of “Bachiller,” indicating he held a university degree (Esquibel and Colligan n.d.). The great-grandfather of the Góngora clan (a group of seven siblings who came to New Mexico with their widowed mother, Petronila de la Cueva) was a literary master of early seventeenth century Nueva España. Bartolomé de Góngora (born ca. 1578, Éjica, Andalusia; died ca. 1657, Mexico City) authored six books and gained the favors of several viceroys of Nueva España. His writings reveal he was an extremely well-read individual who drew from varied sources, including the bible, the classics (Ovid, Seneca, Aristotle, Virgil, Horace), the early church fathers, Christian ascetics (St. Teresa, Juan de Ávila, Fray Domingo de Baltanás), Spanish histories and biographies, and New World epics and histories (Esquibel and Colligan n.d.). His great-grandson, Cristóbal de Góngora, served in various official capacities in New Mexico, most often as notary for official documents and lawyer representing clients in judicial cases.

The surviving writings of New Mexico colonial poet Miguel de Quintana y Valdés Altamirano, a Mexico City native, are a testament to the education he received as a youth in Mexico City and reveal the influences of the spiritual and intellectual milieu of Nueva España. It has been suggested that Quintana was the author of a version of the well-known, traditional nativity play of *Las Pastores*, which is still performed today in New Mexico (Colahan and Lomelí 1983; also see Chapter 22, this volume). His known writings are personal expressions of his spirituality, nourished by the prevailing religiosity of Nueva España. It may have been letters written to his family in Mexico City that led his younger brother, José de Quintana, to come to New Mexico by 1696.

Here it is notable to mention that the familial and community seeds of the Penitente Brotherhood of northern New Mexico were very likely sown by the Spanish families from Nueva España who instilled in their children and grandchildren a genuine devotion to the Catholic faith with an emphasis on the suffering of Christ’s passion and the love of Mary, the Queen of Heaven. By the second decade of the nineteenth century the Penitente Brotherhood was firmly established as a society for devout men who assisted the community, particularly orphans and widowed women, and celebrated the passion of Christ through group prayer and penance for their sins.

Another educated person among the colonists from Mexico City was Juan de Paz Bustillos, also known as Juan de Bustos. Paz Bustillos received a land grant at Santa Cruz from Governor Vargas in 1695 but sold the grant in 1700 because his ill health prevented him from working the land. He relocated to Santa Fe, where he kept school (SANM I:1076; Esquibel and Colligan n.d.). It is not certain how many students he had over the years, but Paz Bustillos can be considered as possibly the earliest known public schoolmaster in colonial New Mexico. He was still living in Santa Fe as late as June 1721.

Yet another noteworthy individual was Dimas Jirón de Tejeda, who came from Mexico City with his parents at the age of ten. At the time of his death in 1736 he possessed three medical books and assorted instruments for bloodletting and for extracting teeth (SANM I:1223). He appears to have received some education as well as training as a barber.

With connections in Mexico City, some of the colonizing families entered into lucrative commercial ventures which benefited not only them, but also the economy of New Mexico. Expedition member Francisco de Betanzos (aka Francisco Afán de Rivera) became a prosperous merchant who left a large estate at Santa Cruz which was divided among his heirs after he died while traveling in Nueva Vizcaya (Chávez 1976:266; SANM II:355). Another merchant was Antonio Godines, who traded heavily in Parral, Chihuahua, and Sonora, and died at Santa Fe with a large unpaid debt totaling 2,029 pesos. This was a considerable amount of money, indicating Godines was very active in commercial trading and was heavily invested at the time of his death (SANM I:305). Compare this amount of debt with the 2,000 peso annual salary of don Diego de Vargas as governor and the average 150 peso annual salary of a soldier. Others recruited at Mexico City who became involved in commerce were the Sandoval Martínez, Sayago, Vallejo, and García de la Riva families.

The women of the colonizing expedition from Mexico City were no less influential; however, existing records provide less documentation. Josefa de Pas Bustillos (born ca. 1684, Mexico City), the goddaughter and possibly the niece of Juan de Paz Bustillos, was an exceptional pioneer woman. She never married, yet she acquired a land grant along the Chama River and was matriarch of a large family. She had at least six children, and possibly seven, who went by the various surnames of Bustos, Valdés y Bustos, Paz Bustillos, Ontiveros, de la Rosa, González de la Rosa, and González. She lived to about the age of 88 and had as many as 70 descendants by the time of her death at Santa Cruz in December 1772 (Esquibel and Colligan n.d.).

Accusations of witchcraft were made against colonizer doña Inés de Aspeitia, daughter-in-law of Petronila de la Cueva. Testimonies in a couple of cases against doña Inés make references to snakes, potions, wrapped bones, herbs, formulas, and spells for getting a man (Archivo General de Indias, México, Inquisición, t. 735, f. 277, 278, 292, 294, 295). It is difficult to determine what practices and herbal remedies were brought from Mexico City, but there must have been some sharing of practices between the women from Nueva España and those raised on the frontier.

Francisca de Velasco, possibly a close relative of the García de la Riva-Velasco Díaz family, was an older widow who traveled to New Mexico with a 25-year-old nephew and a 12-year-old niece. She settled at Santa Fe, and sometime between 1697 and 1703 she became the godmother of one of the two children of fellow expedition members Juan de Archibeque and Antonia Gutiérrez. When Antonia Gutiérrez died in 1703, Francisca de Velasco began to fulfill her *compradazgo* duties by caring for and raising the young children. Archibeque remained a widower until 1719 and came to rely on his *comadre* for her assistance in rearing his children (SANM I:13).

The occupations of many of the men among the colonists proved useful and valuable as the people of Spanish New Mexico firmly established their presence and expanded their settlements. Yet there were opportunities in New Mexico not readily available to these tradesmen in the large cities of Nueva España. Some of the men and their sons came to occupy important civil and military positions such as *alcalde mayor* (José Lorenzo de Casados, Nicolás Ortiz, Miguel Ladrón de Guevara, Nicolás Ortiz y Barba Coronado), *alcalde ordinario* (José Rodríguez), *alguacil mayor* (chief constable: Antonio de Aguilera Isasi, Antonio Godines), *notario* (Cristóbal de Góngora, Miguel de Quintana, Antonio de Silva), *alguacil mayor* of the Holy Office of the Inquisition (Juan García de la Riva), *protector de indios* (protector of the Indians: Juan de Atienza), *capitán de guerra* (war captain: Francisco de Espíndola), *ayudante* (adjunct: Juan Ruiz Cordero), *capitan* (captain: Miguel de la Vega y Coca,

Francisco Lorenzo Casados), and alférez (lieutenant: José Ruiz de Valdés, Diego Márquez de Ayala). These positions were essential in running civil government and dealing with the dangers of frontier life, but they also served to enhance the social status of the individuals who held these positions.

Finally, the most important contributions of the colonists recruited at Mexico City to the society of Spanish colonial New Mexico, and the truest measure of their successful efforts to recolonize New Mexico, are the numerous descendants of these families who continued to populate New Mexico throughout the colonial, Mexican, and territorial periods into the twentieth century. Thirty-four of the 65 families that came from Mexico City to Santa Fe in 1694 are known to have modern descendants. The following 25 family names have survived more than 300 years and can be frequently encountered in many areas of New Mexico and southern Colorado: Aragón, Archibeque, Atencio (Atienza), Bustos, Cárdenas, Casados, Castellanos, Coca, Cortés, García, Gurulé (Grollet), Jaramillo, Jirón, Mascareñas, Molina, Moya, Ortiz, Quintana, Rodríguez, Salas, Sandoval, Sena, Silva, Valdés, and Vallejos. This is a testament of the lasting contribution to the recolonization of New Mexico made by a remarkable group of American colonial pioneers who traveled and lived on the Camino Real and settled on the far northern frontier. ♣

NOTES

1. In June 1691, heavy rainfall in Mexico City and the surrounding area caused ravines and normally dry streams to overflow. This was followed in July by thirteen days of rain, causing Lake Texcoco to flood the city. Streets became impassable and had to be navigated by canoe. The flood worsened, with additional water running off the nearby mountains. Buildings collapsed, and supplies of firewood, meat, and vegetables became scarce. Many crops had failed, and other crops could not be harvested in August because of additional rainfall. All residents, rich and poor, suffered from food shortages, which hit the city hard in September and continued into the spring of 1692. Much of the populace grew extremely discontented and demanded that royal authorities act to make food available. This discontent found expression in protests and rioting in June 1692, when more than two hundred Indians attacked the palace of the archbishop and the royal palace, which housed the viceroy (Sigüenza y Góngora 1932).
2. For new genealogical data concerning many of the colonists, see Esquibel and Colligan n.d.

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“A Harp for Playing”

Domestic Goods Transported over the Camino Real

Donna Pierce and Cordelia Thomas Snow



FRANCE VINTON SCHOLLES BELIEVED life in seventeenth-century New Mexico was primitive at best, “characterized by a roughness, a lack of luxury and refinement, a crudeness and a striking degree of ignorance” (1935:99). W. W. H. Davis and other territorial and military personnel apparently believed that concept defined *all* life in New Mexico from settlement by the Spanish in 1598 throughout the first half of the nineteenth century (Davis 1982).

Indeed, if one looks only at the archaeological record to define the lifestyle of the Spanish and Mexican colonial periods, that dismal view of “poor” New Mexico appears to be upheld in large part. According to an on-going study by James L. Moore, Office of Archaeological Studies, Museum of New Mexico, an average of only two or three percent of the artifacts recovered from recognized Hispanic sites in New Mexico were “imported” goods.¹ This suggests a make-do, isolated way of life, since more than ninety percent of the remainder is made up of local ceramics, faunal remains, ground stone, and lithic artifacts. But, the archaeological record is concerned only with non-perishable items—and as such, represents, in fact, less than half of the material culture transported to New Mexico during the Spanish and Mexican periods. When one compares the archaeological record with historical documentation, an entirely different view of New Mexico is readily apparent.

Throughout the colonial period, New Mexicans continued to ship goods, many of which had been imported to Mexico, over the Camino Real. New Mexico may have been on the northern frontier of New Spain, but until New Mexico came under first U. S. military and then territorial rule, it had been an integral, if remote, part of the Spanish empire, and after independence, part of Mexico. We must remember there was no border between New Mexico and New Spain until the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Gadsden Purchase in the mid-nineteenth century.² And while it took weeks and months instead of days and hours, communication between New Mexico, Mexico City, and ultimately Spain was regular, constant, and consistent with the times.

Living conditions may have been primitive in this northernmost outpost of New Spain, but beginning with the colonists who accompanied Juan de Oñate to San Juan de los Caballeros, and shortly thereafter, to San Gabriel, the Franciscan fathers and settlers attempted to re-create life as they had known it in Mexico and Spain. As a result, they brought their material culture with them

(Hammond and Rey 1953).³ For example, although most of the colonists listed only arms and armor, several among them, including Alonso de Quesada, listed personal items such as a bed, blankets, bedspread, hats, three pewter plates and seven books, “religious and non-religious” (Hammond and Rey 1953[1]:252).⁴

Supplies sent to Oñate himself in 1600 included four pounds of saffron (which industry, by the way, the Spaniards introduced into Mexico early on), while the contents of two boxes destined for “don Cristobal” were valued at more than 1,000 pesos! The inventory of Antonio Conde de Herrera and his wife, doña Francisca Galindo, staggers the imagination:

Seven men’s suits of wool, coarse cloth, and silk . . . two pairs of house slippers . . . three doublets . . . one of taffeta . . . a camp bed . . . eight small chairs . . . one Michoacan table . . . one tub for washing . . . [a dress] of crimson satin embroidered in gold . . . another of red satin with sashes and gold trimmings . . . two silk shawls with bead tassels . . . a small pot and saltceller of silver with six small and one large spoons . . . a bedspread of crimson taffeta trimmed with lace . . . and many other things suitable for the adornment of women and the home. . . .

Captain Francisco Donis’s belongings included:

Five suits of clothes; four doublets; four hats; two pairs of silk stockings . . . some cordovan boots with velvet tops; six pairs of spurs; a tent of skins; a gold medal; ten shirts; four sheets . . . four pillows; two tablecloths with napkins . . . and many other small things.

Among those small things “suitable for the adornment of the home” not mentioned in the inventories were such items as cups and soup plates of Chinese porcelain, vessels of Spanish lusterware, knobbed glass drinking vessels, brass candlesticks, and religious metals, all recovered from archaeological excavations at San Gabriel (Simmons 1987).

Other seventeenth-century sites in New Mexico such as missions, Spanish homesites, and the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe also yielded fragments of imported non-perishable items: Chinese porcelain, Mexican majolica, gold and silver jewelry, silk fabrics with silver and gold-thread galloon and buttons, ivory objects, iron and copper utensils, and many more (Snow 1974). Few documentary sources list or mention personal or household goods owned by seventeenth-century colonists in New Mexico. One exception is the inventory of the household and personal possessions of Francisco Gomez Robledo taken when he was arrested on May 4, 1662, and sent to Mexico City to stand trial before the Inquisition.⁵ Gomez Robledo was later exonerated of all charges and returned to spend the rest of his life in New Mexico.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, both the archaeological record and historical documents indicate that some residents of New Mexico continued to live in relative style. More than 150 wills and inventories are scattered through the Spanish and Mexican archives of New Mexico. The present research is based on fifty documents.⁶ Surprisingly, these documents are not all skewed toward the rich and famous: for example, Catalina Duran, a mestiza, mother of Antonio Duran de Armijo, died destitute some seventy years after her arrival in New Mexico in 1695 with Juan Paez Hurtado.⁷ The documents represent a cross section of New Mexicans, from obviously wealthy individuals such as José Reano de Tagle and Juana Luján to much poorer individuals: Españoles, *mestizos* (“mixed” Hispanic and Mexican Indian), *coyotes* (mixed Spanish and New Mexican Hispanic or Indian), Indios, men, women, blacksmiths, weavers, soldiers, ranchers, and traders are all included.⁸ The diversity is what makes these documents particularly fascinating, because

everybody had something, even if only paper prints of saints. By the same token, although locally made ceramics make up a large percentage of artifacts recovered from colonial sites, there is only one possible reference to such ceramics in all the wills and inventories reviewed. That reference is to an earthenware olla for which no valuation is given.

At the same time, imported goods were listed even when broken. This is particularly true of broken metal tools. Because Spain attempted to monopolize importation of iron and steel to Mexico, metal was highly curated on the frontier (Simmons and Turley 1980:xvi, 7).⁹

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

Many of the documents also include brief descriptions of houses and property owned by the deceased. In 1660 Gomez Robledo's home was described as a "house that is located on the corner of the royal plaza of this villa [Santa Fe] that has a sala [living room], three rooms, and an [interior] patio with its door to the kitchen at the rear."¹⁰ In addition Gomez Robledo also owned a large estancia called Las Barrancas, somewhere south of Albuquerque.

We know, not from a will or inventory, but a law suit, that in 1720 the Palace of the Governors was two stories in height, complete with a balcony and [a door or windows with] shutters which could be barred and which overlooked the plaza to the south (SANM II:307; see also Snow 1993b). In addition, after the robber Ysidro Sánchez gained entry to the building, he entered a first-floor storeroom by means of an interior stairway.

There are numerous other references to two-story structures in the documents. Prior to her death in 1744 in Santa Cruz, Margarita Martín had owned two houses, one described as a "house of two stories with two living rooms and three [other] rooms together with 34 fruit trees." The inventory of Antonio Duran de Armijo, resident of San Geronimo de Taos in 1748, lists "one house with eight rooms, four below and four above, besides two porches after the same fashion." Gertrudis Martín, also of Santa Cruz, owned a two-story house of six rooms prior to her death in 1762. In Santa Fe, also in 1762, Tomasa Benavides owned a "two-story house, four rooms, two upstairs and two downstairs."

Other examples of architectural interest are found in the documents: for example, when Francisco Romero, a "Coyote," died in 1765 in Taos, he left a ten-room house with two porches valued at 1,050 pesos. The house included an associated structure, "one round tower containing three rooms . . . built as a fort and security." José de Reano Tagle, a native of the province of Santander in Spain, also owned two houses, one on San Francisco Street in Santa Fe containing five rooms and the other at El Alamo, southwest of Santa Fe, with thirteen rooms. Juana Luján owned a three-room house in Santa Cruz, but she occupied a house of twenty-four rooms at San Ildefonso. Not only did Juan Montes Vigil, a native of Zacatecas, own a ranch with a three-room house at Buena Vista, then on the outskirts of Santa Fe, he also had a townhouse in Santa Fe. The place in town was described as: "at the entrance of San Francisco Street with a portion of land in the front on the south side . . . another piece of land at the back of the house with fruit trees. . . [a house of] ten rooms and a corral all surrounded by an adobe wall with a gate." Ownership of townhouses and country estates by a single individual is a continuation of a pattern found in Spain and Mexico and is seen throughout the historical period in New Mexico.

FURNITURE

Nineteenth-century visitors to New Mexico remarked on the lack of furniture in Spanish households. However, New Mexican wills and inventories record quite a bit of furniture for a culture that traditionally did not use much. The Anglo-American perspective of a lack of furniture has been

perpetrated in subsequent discussions of New Mexican furniture without considering Spanish customs.¹¹ Indeed, northern European travelers to Spain and Mexico voiced the same comments, particularly in regard to seat furniture (Calderon de la Barca 1966:55, 64, 108–109, 112, 152, 169, 221, 227, 276, 376, 506; Dalrymple 1777:14–15; Townsend 1791[2]:34, 114, 155; Weismann 1976:63–70). Through Moorish influence it had become customary in Spain since the Middle Ages for a receiving and sitting area to be set up in one end of the *sala* (hall or formal living room) on a raised platform called an *estrado* (Burr 1964:41–43, 69, 109; Carrillo y Gariel 1985:63–64; Metropolitan Museum 1990:44–46). The estrado was usually carpeted and supplied with cushions or small stools for sitting which were arranged around a perfumed charcoal-burning brazier for warmth. From the seventeenth century on, folding screens were frequently added to the estrado area to retain the heat from the brazier, block drafts, and provide privacy. Low chairs, known as *taburetes*, were added to the estrado area in Spain and Mexico during the late seventeenth century and low benches or settees in the eighteenth century, with women usually still preferring pillows and stools to accommodate their wide skirts. Several of the inventories included in this study mention pillows and cushions, such as that of Francisco Gomez Robledo in 1660. Chairs and benches are also mentioned.

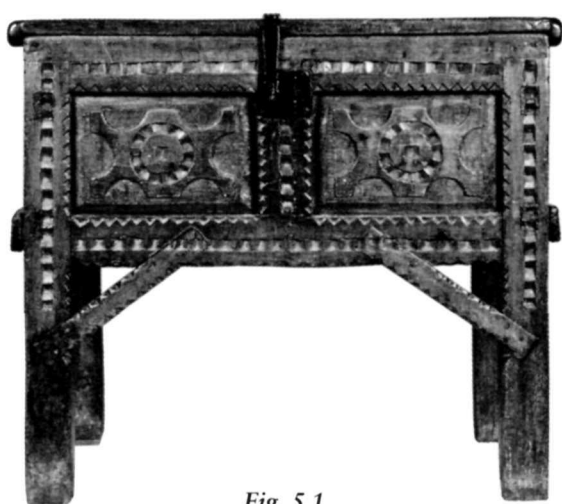


Fig. 5.1

Chest-on-legs, late 18th century New Mexico. Chests with stiles extended to form short feet were common in northern Spain, but the extension of stiles to form tall legs is unique to New Mexico. Photo Jack Parsons. Spanish Colonial Arts Society Collection. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe. (Accession#L.5.75-78)

Chests of all kinds were the most common type of furniture listed in the inventories. Some were made locally and others imported; some had interior compartments or drawers, such as *varguenos* or *papeleras* (writing chests). Gomez Robledo owned one in 1660; it was described as “one writing desk with nine drawers and lock and key.”

Since precolumbian times the Michoacán area had been well known for the production of brightly colored and lacquered objects. Many of the New Mexican estate wills and inventories mention chests from Michoacán. Juan Montes Vigil owned six, including “a Michoacan writing desk with three drawers, with its table of the same; it was valued, because of its fine painting, good appearance, and fine gold leaf, at eighty pesos.” Margarita Martín from Santa Cruz had one, complete with lock and key, and valued at twelve pesos in 1744. In 1752, the inventory of María Diega Garduno listed “three chests for storing clothes, two from Michoacan and one plain with their keys.” Juana Luján, whose

twenty-four room house and walled garden encroached upon lands of San Ildefonso, also had a chest from Michoacán. The estate of Joseph Miguel Ribera of Santa Fe declared a chest from Michoacán, as did the estate of Monica Tomasa Martín from Taos, both in 1771. When Gertrudis Armijo died in 1776 she left two Michoacán chests to her husband, Manuel Vigil, who must have acquired another for he left three to his heirs in 1780.

Other inventories listed chests and furniture “made in this country,” without further identification, such as the last will of Manuel Duran y Armijo, which listed “three wooden chests, made in this country, with their iron locks.” Gertrudis Martín had a “native chest.” Monica Tomasa Martín owned a locally made trunk, a bedstead with railing, a table and bench.

Fig. 5.2
Iron fitting lock. Photo Blair Clark. Courtesy Palace of the Governors, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe.



Even after the Pueblo Revolt, Pecos Pueblo had maintained its seventeenth-century reputation for fine carpentry (see Bakker, Chapter 9). Diego Manuel Baca noted in his will in 1727 that Juan Gabriel from Pecos Pueblo owed him one double door, three single doors, and five windows in addition to a large table, two wooden seats with backs (presumably benches), and four elbow, or arm chairs. In 1752 Maria Diega Garduno's inventory listed two bedsteads from Pecos, one with railings. Juan Montes Vigil in 1762 owned "twelve chairs from Pecos."

In 1736 Pedro de Chávez had household furniture valued at 246 pesos. Margarita Martín's household furniture included a tall wooden cupboard, bench, pine table, a wooden chair without arms, a high wooden bed with small posts, and "a harp for playing." Antonio Duran de Armijo owned a wooden wardrobe in addition to two tables, "one large one with a drawer, and another small one." Juan Antonio Fernandez of Santa Fe left in his 1784 will "one long chest with its key; one large grain chest; ten half-vara frames, nine gilt and one plain; two mirrors with gilt frames; three chests with keys; two tables, one large one small; and two chairs."

Based on the comments of early nineteenth-century travelers to New Mexico from the East Coast, it has been assumed that beds were virtually unknown in New Mexico prior to Anglo-American influence. A survey of the estate inventories surviving from the eighteenth century indicated that some upper- and middle-income Spanish homes did have wooden beds. Juan de Oñate had two cast iron bedsteads shipped to him in 1600 (Hammond and Rey 1953[1]:522). As early as 1704, Governor Diego de Vargas owned a "high wooden bed." Wooden beds with railings, possibly similar to the popular Taos bed of today, are described in the inventories of María Diega Garduno of Santa Fe in 1752 and Miguel Lucero of Fuenclara (Albuquerque) in 1766. Margarita Martín of Santa Cruz owned a "high wooden bed with posts" in 1744, and Clemente Gutierrez of San Isidro de Pajarito near Isleta owned two beds, one of iron and the other of red ebony, obviously imported, in 1785. Wooden bedsteads were also owned by Diego Marquez of Santa Cruz in 1729, Juana Lujan of San Ildefonso in 1762, Francisco Romero of Taos in 1765, Jose Baca of Pajarito in 1766, Manuel Delgado of Santa Fe in 1815, and María Micaela Baca of Santa Fe in 1832.

RELIGIOUS IMAGERY

Another category of materials not likely to be found in the archaeological record is paintings on hide, canvas, and paper, which are mentioned repeatedly in wills and inventories. Paintings on hide were apparently painted in New Mexico for local use and for export to the mining towns of northern Mexico. Locally produced paintings on hide were used in addition to imported religious imagery in both homes and churches. In 1846–1847, Lieutenant J. W. Abert noted, "scattered about through New Mexico, one frequently meets with fine specimens of art, particularly oil paintings. . . . My Spanish landlady has a fine picture of a female saint, that I have endeavored to purchase from her . . . but she could not be induced to part with it" (Abert 1962:41; Susan Shelby Magoffin also mentions paintings of saints, and bultos [Drumm 1982:166]).

In 1753 Juana Galbana, a native of Zia Pueblo, owned "two silver reliquaries, one metal crucifix, different pictures of saints, and a painting of the infant Jesus on elkskin." When he died in Santa Fe in 1743, Vicente de Armijo, a mestizo native of Zacatecas, owned "two wall tapestries made of four skins each . . . (and) two more wall tapestries that will be brought by the Indian Ignacio of Santa Clara."



Fig. 5.3

Our Lady of the Rosary framed art. Photo Margery Denton. Historical Society of New Mexico Collection. Courtesy Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe.



Fig. 5.4
Crucifix. Photo Margery
Denton. Courtesy
Museum of International
Folk Art, Santa Fe.

The estate of Gertrudis Martín of Santa Cruz in 1762 indicates how these religious images were used within the households in the following description: “one altar with twelve images, two in sculpture and the others paper pictures (engravings).” Also from Santa Cruz, Margarita Martín’s 1744 inventory listed “two small paintings on canvas of St. Isabel,” while Lugarda Quintana owned “fourteen images of saints, all small; and one bronze crucifix” in 1749. In the Albuquerque area, Luis García’s inventory of 1747 included eleven little frames, presumably with their pictures. Antonio Duran de Armijo’s estate in Taos had ten engravings, “one large one of Our Lady, two medium sized ones of Saints Dominic and Vincent, and the others, small ones of various saints.” Tomasa Benavides of Santa Fe owned “one crucifix, and one framed painting on canvas of St. Francis Xavier” in 1762. In 1763 Pedro de Chávez of Atrisco owned paintings on canvas of the Crucified Christ and St. James (Santiago), and Francisco Romero’s estate included three framed pictures in 1765. Four framed paintings—Our Lady of Sorrows, St. John, Our Lady of Bethlehem, and Our Lady of Guadalupe—and eleven vellums [possibly referring to paintings on hide] were listed in the estate of Monica Tomasa Martín in 1771.

Although Juan Antonio Fernández’s nine paintings with gilt frames were impressive, Gertrudis Armijo’s effects were most unexpected. Included in Armijo’s possessions at the time of her death in 1776 were “twelve canvas paintings, as well as twelve more, that total twenty-four in all.” At the time of his death in 1762, Juan Montes Vigil of Santa Fe owned twenty-two paintings, seventeen of which are described as three-quarters of a vara high and five are described as half a vara in height; eleven other paintings had been given to his son previously. Finally, Antonio Duran de Armijo had “one small looking glass,” while Juan Antonio Fernández had two mirrors with gilded frames a “half-vara” in size.

TEXTILES AND CLOTHING

Overall New Mexicans tended to wear their wealth; however, fabric is only rarely found in archaeological excavations. But, in one of those rare instances, a burial suit was recovered in the late 1960s behind St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe. The suit worn by the Duke of Linares, Viceroy of Mexico, in a portrait painted at the beginning of the eighteenth century is identical, except for color and possibly choice of fabric. The silk suit with gold-thread galloon and buttons is similar to ones described in the estate wills and inventories.¹²

In 1660 when Francisco Gómez Robledo’s possessions were confiscated, his personal clothing included two leather raincoats; two pairs of lined brown leather shoes from Cordova, Spain; seven varas of new cinnamon-colored cloth; four varas of new pink taffeta from Castille; three and one third varas of galloon trim—obviously Gómez Robledo was about to have a new suit made.

In 1748, Antonio Duran de Armijo’s estate included six varas of embroidered ribbon from Spain, ten varas of red China silk, one short coat of blue Castilian cloth (from Spain) with buttonholes worked in silver, and one hatband of silk ribbon. José Maldonado’s inventory included one and one half varas of green silk cloth, twelve and a quarter varas of Spanish tassel, one pair of French cloth stockings, and two pairs of Chinese embroidered stockings. Luis García Noriega’s wardrobe included a coat of scarlet cloth lined with twill silk, a coat of Castilian cloth with scarlet lining, one coat of Cholula (Mexico) cloth without lining, a pair of scarlet cloth pants, and another of velvet, a satin scarf, one pair black stockings embroidered with silk, and two old hats, one beaver and one ordinary. Juan Antonio Fernández’s estate included two pairs of trousers, (plus) the velvet ones, a velvet jacket, a serge

jacket, a white cape lined in scarlet cloth, six rainbow-colored silk scarves, three hats, one silk skirt with gold fringe valued at 100 pesos [his wife's], and a gold embroidered cloth scarf valued at 125 pesos.

Juana Luján, who died in 1762, owned a shirt of Brittany linen embroidered in black silk; a blouse of Brittany linen, pleated and trimmed with sequins; a scarlet cape; gloves of scalloped lace; a new cape of Chinese silk with silver trim; a cloak with embroidered trim; silk stockings; a feathered hat; shawls of black cloth with gold fringe, and a white one with gold and silk lace; a brown brocade hoop skirt with silver fringe; and a black satin hoop skirt with silver fringe. Juana Luján's wardrobe also included numerous underskirts or petticoats, for example “one of blue serge, and another white with blue embroidery.” She had one pair of shoes with heels, twelve pairs of “slipper shoes,” three pairs of silver shoe buckles, and two painted ivory fans from China.

Margarita Martín possessed four and one quarter varas of wine-colored moire wool at a cost of 20 pesos a vara; two and one quarter varas of very fine, dark purple woolen cloth at forty-five pesos; ten varas of narrow black silk ribbon with silver flowers; six varas of silver net lace from Seville; a silk shawl with silver fringe; drawnwork shirt sleeves, and other sleeves of British linen embroidered in silk; a blue silk damask cloak lined in red Chinese silk; a blue satin scarf; an embroidered luster cloth shawl valued at 40 pesos; a purple *pollesa* (hoop skirt) of *piquin* (Chinese silk); a long petticoat of reddish China silk; a new skirt with silver fringe; and some slipper shoes. Gertrudis Armijo, the same woman who owned the twenty-four paintings on canvas, had a silk under-petticoat and another of “fancy spotted silk,” a fine scarf and head covering, and two kimonos.¹³ Monica Tomasa Martín owned a blue satin short cape, silver shoe buckles, a crimson velvet cape, a pair of blue silk embroidered stockings, a “rich silk flesh-colored petticoat,” and a black velvet waistcoat.

Juan Montes Vigil was in a category by himself. Included in the inventory of his estate in 1762 were “a cloth cape with a second lining of ‘lila’ [lilac-colored satin], one Castilian cloth jacket, one fine cloth waist-coat, first grade, one pair of trousers of fine cloth, one pair of trousers of black velvet, a new jacket lined with blue silk, three pairs of white trousers, two old shirts, four caps, one handkerchief and five old lapels from Terlinga.”

Montes Vigil's wife, Nicolasa Luján, owned “two scarlet cloth skirts, one with fringe; several skirts of blue serge; one fine kimono; one yellow short cape embroidered with turquoise, silver and silk thread; a short black cape of velvet from China; a striped dress with silk petticoat and jacket of green Persian cloth; a skirt of gold cloth and gold fringe; one hoop skirt of melindre with silver flowers and fringe; a double black skirt; a luster cloth cloak with fringe; a petticoat of satin from Valencia [Spain]; an all silk shawl; another all silk shawl with white background and fringe.”

When Manuel Delgado died in 1814, he owned thirteen suits of velvet, cashmere, and silk. He also owned two locally made three-piece buckskin suits, each consisting of a quilted vest, a jacket, and pants, and a beaver felt sombrero with silver galloon and silver wire embroidery.

The inclusion of bolt fabric in estate wills and inventories implies that clothing was both imported ready-made and made locally by tailors in New Mexico. Seven tailors immigrated to New Mexico in

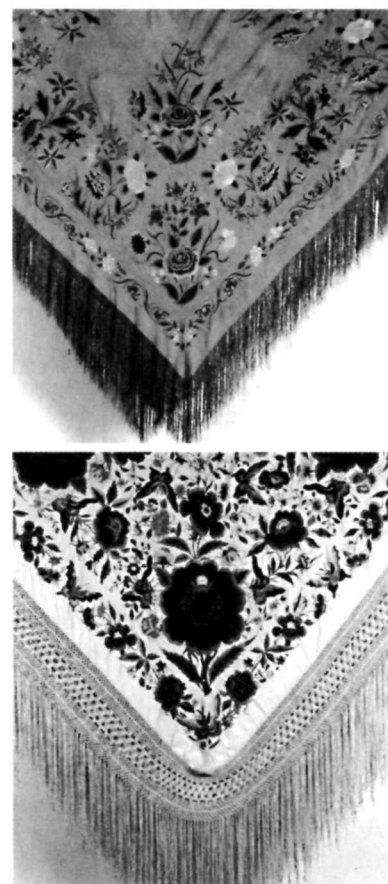


Fig. 5.5
Silk shawls from the Orient were imported to Mexico and Spain via the Manila galleons beginning in the late 16th century.
Photos Jack Parsons.
Spanish Colonial Arts Society Collection. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.

1694, and a tailor named Miguel Rendon was working in Santa Fe in 1784 when he was mentioned in the will of Juan Antonio Fernandez (see also Esquibel 1994).

Numerous inventories mentioned imported blankets; for example, Juan Antonio Fernandez owned a blanket from Potosi and four from Villa Alta. Textiles from Villa Alta, Queretaro, Potosi, Saltillo, Campeche, Sonora, Cholula, Puebla, and other places in Mexico are mentioned in various documents. However, with twenty blankets from Villa Alta, valued at 5 pesos each, and twenty “patio” blankets at 8 pesos each, Jose Miguel Ribera’s inventory exceeded all others, and is reflective of his trading.

Despite the availability of imported fabrics, many New Mexicans were weavers. Looms, cards, and combs are mentioned in the inventories of, for example, Juan Felipe Ribera of Santa Fe in 1770, Miguel Romero of Cochiti in 1771, Calletano Torres of Sabinal in 1780, Manuel Vigil of Taos in 1780, José Duran y Chavez of Alameda in 1780, Antonio Ortega of Santa Fe in 1785, Salvador Armijo of Santa Fe in 1803, and Jose María Padilla of Santa Fe in 1816. Indigo for dying was imported from Mexico and appears in inventories, such as the “two pounds of crude indigo and one and one half pounds of pure indigo” mentioned in the will of Francisco de Jesus y Espejo in 1733. Indigo also appears in the estate inventories of Juan Felipe Rivera and Juan Antonio Fernandez of 1784, among others. A log of Campeche wood imported for making a reddish brown dye was included in the wills of Diego Manuel Baca in 1727 and his brother, Cristobal Baca, in 1739.

JEWELRY

Another way in which the inhabitants of New Mexico wore their wealth was in the form of jewelry. Margarita Martín possessed seven strings of black pearls, while Lugarda Quintana had a necklace of corals and silver disks, some blue enamel bracelets, and earrings of fine pearls with heavy pendants. Juana Galbana, from Zia Pueblo, had “two silver reliquaries, a pair of coral bracelets, and another of jet.” Tomasa Benavides owned one pair of fine pearl earrings. Antonio Duran de Armijo owned “one reliquary, plated in gold, one rosary of small silver beads with a silver cross, some coral bracelets which weigh two ounces, some pearl earrings, and a silver toothpick.” Gertrudis Armijo, Antonio Duran de Armijo’s daughter, had a gold and coral brooch valued at thirty pesos.

Juana Luján owned an extensive collection of jewelry, such as silver finger rings, silver chains including one from San Blas (probably Panama), a gilded silver brooch cross with gem stones, a necklace of pearls surrounded by coral beads with a reliquary locket in the center, two rosaries with silver medals, two large silver medallions, bracelets of coral and green glass beads, three silver reliquary lockets (one with a wax image of the Lamb of God), a rosary of large coral beads, one pair of gold earrings with large and small pearls, a pair of earrings with coral and crystals, and two silver jewelry boxes.



Fig. 5.6
Tortoiseshell haircombs. Top—Paris, France; center—Spain;
bottom—Mexico. All from early 19th century. Photos
Jack Parsons. Spanish Colonial Arts Society Collection.
Courtesy Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.
(Accession#L.5.55-78; L.5.90-50d; L.5.55-74)



Fig. 5.7
Silver medallion with painted
images of Sta. Teresa de Avila
and Nuestra Señora de Soledad.
Photo Margery Denton.
Foundation Collection, Museum
of International Folk Art, Santa Fe.

C E R A M I C S

Majolica, delft, and faience are soft-paste ceramics with lead-tin glazes and were initially produced to imitate Chinese porcelains before Europeans discovered the secret of hard-paste porcelain. Both majolica and Chinese porcelains continued to be shipped to New Mexico throughout the eighteenth century and on into the nineteenth century. Abó and Puebla Polychrome, both made in Mexico, are two of the most common majolica types found at seventeenth-century sites in New Mexico (see Fournier, Chapter 12). The designs on Abó Polychrome were derived from designs on Chinese porcelains and Italian Renaissance ceramics of the period, whereas those on Puebla Polychrome are based on Spanish laces. Other seventeenth-century majolica types recovered in New Mexico include Puebla Blue-on-White, Aranama, Castillo, and Puaray polychromes. Tallahassee Blue-on-White, a rare type of majolica in New Mexico, was made in Spain.

Within a few short years of the opening of trade between Spain and the Orient in 1567, Chinese imports flooded into Mexico (see Chapter 11). The goods, which included silks, ivory, and porcelains, were shipped from Manila to Acapulco where they were off-loaded and packed on mules to Mexico City. There the goods were either sold or repacked for Vera Cruz and shipment to Spain. Although Chinese porcelain was said to have been “worth its weight in silver” at the time, sherds of porcelain have been recovered from virtually all seventeenth- and eighteenth-century mission and domestic sites in New Mexico, including Navajo refugee sites.

Majolica and Chinese porcelains continued to be imported throughout the eighteenth century and on into the nineteenth century. Seventeenth-century majolica types were replaced by other forms of Puebla Blue-on-White, Huejotzingo Blue and Yellow Banded, and Tumacacori Polychrome. After the opening of the Santa Fe Trail, majolica was slowly replaced by eastern ceramic types such as sponge ware, gaudy Dutch, mocha (or banded) ware often with dendritic designs, transfer prints, flint china, and the like.

Antonio Duran de Armijo had two cups and two small bowls from China. Margarita Martín had six medium-sized plates of Chinese porcelain, while Luis Garcia had “one olla from Puebla (majolica)” in addition to two mugs or cups of Chinese porcelain. Lugarda Quintana of Santa Cruz owned “three small bowls, two fine (Chinese porcelain?) and one ordinary (majolica?) and one ‘Alcorzar’ pitcher.” The latter refers to the royal ceramics factory established in Alcora, Spain, in 1727, famous for its delicate rococo designs in pastel colors. Gertrudis Armijo owned “one half dozen small bowls of Chinese porcelain and one half dozen Chinese porcelain cups.” Juan Antonio Fernandez had six cups of Chinese porcelain and three (majolica) cups from Puebla. Juan Montes Vigil had a large collection of ceramics, including twelve plates of Chinese porcelain, nine small china cups, and six Chinese porcelain soup plates and twenty ceramic jugs. Finally, Juana Luján owned six cups from Puebla and three small bowls of Chinese porcelain in addition to two cups and two saucers from China, three additional pieces of porcelain, and a majolica saltcellar.

S I L V E R

Just as in seventeenth-century New Mexico, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century New Mexicans continued to purchase and use silverware. Juana Luján had cups made of coconut shell fitted with silver just as Diego de Vargas did. She also had a silver bowl with a scalloped rim, in addition to two silver jewel boxes, one old and six new silver spoons, and three pairs of silver buckles. Gertrudis Armijo had a half dozen silver spoons while Luis Garcia had a silver spoon, a saltcellar, and a silver tobacco pouch. Monica Tomasa Martín also had a silver snuff box or tobacco container in addition to a silver fork, spoon, and saltcellar. Francisco Romero had a silver spoon, and Antonio Duran de Armijo’s inventory included broken silver and that most wonderful of conceits, a silver toothpick.



Fig. 5.8
Candlesticks.
Photo Margery Denton.
Fred Harvey Collection.
Courtesy Museum of
International Folk Art,
Santa Fe.

Prior to his death in 1762, Juan Montes Vigil had given his son, Manuel, one silver bowl and six silver spoons. Although the silver bowl does not appear in Manuel Vigil's inventory of 1780, the number of silver spoons had been increased to a dozen. Severino Martinez owned four silver plates, four silver spoons and forks, and a "middle-sized" cup of silver.

Pewter, brass (or bronze), and copper were also common. Antonio Duran de Armijo had seven "used" pewter plates, two copper spoons, a bronze weight with scales, a copper jug, two copper ollas, and two large copper kettles. Maria Diega Garduno had two metal candlesticks with sockets. José Duran y Chávez had a copper olla in addition to a copper chocolate pitcher. Monica Tomasa Martín owned a brass spoon and "copper cup for drinking water" in addition to the silver mentioned above. Juana Galbana's estate included three copper drinking cups, a copper kettle, three "metal" plates, and a basin. Luis Garcia had, in addition to two brass (?) candlesticks, two pewter plates, a copper pot, and an iron (?) inkwell. Manuel Vigil, son-in-law of Antonio Duran de Armijo, had a copper olla, a mortar, a bronze candlestick, four brass plates, two "very old" pewter plates, and a copper bowl.

In terms of the archaeological record, metal artifacts would appear to have been in very short supply since they are recovered only in small quantities and, more frequently than not, as unidentifiable bits of rust. The fact of the matter is that metal was highly curated. In 1660 Francisco Gomez Robledo owned twenty-two iron tools including an auger, adze, pincers, large paring chisel, hatchet, plane, small chisel, gouge, saw, woodworker's chisel and hammers plus seven small tools for repairing an arquebus. In 1736 when Manuela de Chavez had her father, Pedro, declared insane so that she could care for her minor siblings, her father's belongings included farming implements, a grill, four spades, an ax, an adze, a chisel, three kettles [and] three more kettles. The inventory of Antonio Duran de Armijo of Taos, a blacksmith, listed fourteen files of various types, eight punches, a variety of chisels, burins, pinchers, nippers, an adze, and an ax in addition to bellows, tongs, hammers, anvils, cold chisels and augers with drills and one arroba (twenty-five pounds) of iron plus eleven pounds of "old (salvage) iron." Manuel Vigil, husband of Gertrudis Armijo, left thirty locks with keys, a broken kettle, three old kettles, and two and a half pounds of broken iron.

Following a listing of property, wills and inventories usually listed arms and armor which had been owned by the deceased. In 1660, Gomez Robledo owned an arquebus, a hilt sword from Toledo (Spain), a dagger, a short sword, one buckskin cuirass, one coat of chain mail, and one morrion helmet as well as one leather breastplate armor for his horse and other assorted horsegear. In 1747 Luis Garcia Noriega stated in his will that he owned "all kinds of arms which are composed of saddle, gun, rapier, bridle spurs and their rowels, and two spears." Antonio Duran de Armijo of Taos owned "a good shot gun trimmed in silver, one short sword, one leather shield (*adarga*) painted in oils, and another not painted." Juan Antonio Fernandez died intestate in 1785; his inventory included two shotguns, and some pistols. Second Lt. José Maldonado of the Santa Fe presidio died in 1789. According to his will he had "one silver garnished rapier, one armament rifle and knife, one government musket (*escopeta*), a mounting saber, with its silver scabbard, and a pair of Napoleonic pistols," in addition to other arms.

MUSIC AND LITERATURE

As early as 1600 one of the friars who came to New Mexico, fray Bernardo de Marta, was renowned throughout Mexico as a fine organist, and only a few years later the first organ in New Mexico was installed at San Felipe Pueblo (Spell 1927:27–30). By 1641 sixteen missions in New Mexico had organs brought over the Camino Real from Mexico (Scholes 1929).¹⁴ Church music was not limited to the importation of ornate traveling organs. In 1672 inventories were made of some of the missions, including Chililí and Tajique, both of which had “sets of trumpets, flageolets and all musical instruments, with which the feasts are celebrated with the greatest harmony of voices and instruments.” Socorro had a set of trumpets with a bassoon “worth eighty pesos in the land” (Scholes and Adams 1952:27–38).

Throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries, music continued to play a role in domestic life. Juan de Archibeque died while on the Villasur expedition to Nebraska in 1720. An eighteen page account book owned by Archibeque began with the statement that he owed “Joseph the harpist, four pesos of wine.” While the identity of Joseph remains unknown, Margarita Martín of Santa Cruz also had “a harp for playing” according to her estate inventory. Both Alcalde Mayor don Manuel Vigil of Taos and Lugarda Quintana of Santa Cruz owned guitars, while Manuel Delgado had a twenty-four string guitar “with its case.” Furthermore, Lugarda Quintana’s father, Miguel de Quintana, who had come to New Mexico with Vargas in 1693, was known as a poet and composer of *coloquios* (Kessell et al. 1995:336 n. 115).

Several of the estate inventories mention one or two books, mostly religious in nature. According to his estate inventory, Manuel Delgado owned at least twenty-five books when he died in 1814, including ones on military law, criminal law, history, religion, natural science, etiquette, and assorted novels. One of the books listed is a copy of the *Teatro Mexicano* (The Mexican Theater), a description of the history, people, lands, customs, and native religions of the New World (including New Mexico), written by a missionary in Mexico in 1624. Other titles were *Flos Sanctorum* (Book of Saints), *Writings of Columbus*, *Letters of Charles V*, *The Conquest of Mexico*, *The Hebrew Monarchy*, *Solomon Crowned*, *David Pursued*, and the *Book of Holy Week*.

TRADING ON THE CAMINO REAL

Trading was a way of life in New Mexico throughout the colonial period, and references to this activity occur in the documents. When Juan de Archibeque died in 1720, his son Miguel was in El Paso del Norte on his way to Sonora on a trading expedition for his father. The trade goods “of the land” (meaning produced in New Mexico) in Miguel’s possession were inventoried as part of his father’s estate. Included were thirty-six chamois skins, eleven painted elk skins, twenty-eight buffalo hides, twelve thick elk skins, four leather jackets, and 309 pairs of stockings, of different colors.

Among the trade goods transported from Mexico already in Juan de Archibeque’s possession were sixteen Campeche blankets plus eleven more, fifteen dozen waistcoat buttons of silver thread, thirteen and one half dozen women’s shoes, one and one half dozen packsaddle girths, two quires of paper, sixty varas of flowered Rouen linen, six and one half varas of narrow English linen, twelve varas of narrow fine linen, eight sets of buttons of imitation silver, and narrow ribbon from Spain.

José Reano de Tagle, another trader, died in Santa Fe in 1743. A native of Santander in Spain, Reano’s inventory included “the goods and merchandise of Castille, China, and from this land, which may be found in chests.” Among those items were the following locally produced items: 233 large buckskins, twenty-three small buckskins, ninety-nine dressed buffalo skins, and seventy-three fanegas of piñon nuts.

Juan Felipe Rivera died in Carrizal on his way back from Sonora on a trading trip in 1770. Some of the items in Rivera's possession at the time of his death included "two serge dress patterns for my wife . . . four reales worth of silk for my little sister-in-law. . . [a] silk handkerchief for my comadre, Josepa Baca . . . three varas of light silk, one cotton scarf and two pairs of shoes for Rosa Lopez . . . one cotton scarf and one pair of shoes and five ounces of indigo for my sister, Lorenza . . . belonging to my brother, Salvador Rivera, five varas of narrow fringe, twenty varas of spangles, one piece of wide Brittany linen, one sugar loaf and one cap . . . belonging to Luis Felipe, some silk stockings, a silk handkerchief, one bundle of tobacco and three pairs of children's shoes . . . belonging to my mother, ten varas of Rouen linen, four pieces of wide Brittany linen, two pieces of unbleached muslin; three patio blankets; four cotton shawls; four pairs of silk stockings" (SANM I:793).

The impact of the opening of the Santa Fe Trail can be seen in the 1832 inventory of Maria Micaela Baca, a resident of Santa Fe. Maria Baca had owned a scarlet silk dress, one of embroidered black silk, another of gauze, a black mantilla, an embroidered dress of lawn, one of tarletan, one of black ribbed silk, and three dresses of calico. She owned two strings of gold beads, a pair of gold earrings, and three gold rings. Maria Baca also owned four large mirrors, eleven holy pictures, six (candle) sconces, four candlesticks, four stools, a small table, a settee, two bedsteads, three Chinese porcelain plates, twenty other plates, including two of flint china, twelve glasses, twelve cups, four fine [porcelain?] bowls, two coffee pots ("one large, one small"), four brass spoons, one crystal saltceller, one small desk, three bottles, four new Indian baskets, and a small silver cup.

After the Santa Fe Trail opened in 1821, the focus of trade gradually changed from Mexico to the eastern United States. The nineteenth-century traders from the East Coast, and later, military and territorial officials, their wives and families, who came to New Mexico over the Santa Fe Trail found a culture alien to the one they were familiar with east of Missouri. Not only were the architecture and material culture they found in New Mexico generally unappreciated, but the entire culture, and specifically the Catholic religion, were quite frequently misunderstood and misinterpreted by these predominately Protestant Americans. In turn, a folk image of "oh, poor New Mexico," was created—an image that still persists.

W. W. H. Davis, an Anglo-American from the East Coast, described the Santa Fe market located under the portal on the western end of the Palace of the Governors in the early 1850s:

The supply is scanty enough and hardly sufficient to meet the limited demand of Santa Fe. . . . the various articles are brought in on burros. . . . the meats are hung upon a line made fast to two posts of the portal, while the vegetables are put on little mats or pieces of board on the ground. . . . if they do not sell out today, they are sure to return with the same stock tomorrow (Davis 1982:172–173).

Compare Davis's description with that of the young girl, Marian Russell, in 1854.

The market place in Santa Fe was a wonder. In open air booths lay piles of food stuff. Heaps of red and green peppers vied with heaps of red and blue corn and heaps of golden melons. There were colorful rugs woven by the hands of the Mexicans and deep-fringed shawls, gay with embroidery. There were massive Indian jars filled to the brim with Mexican beans. There were strings of prayer beads from old Mexico, beads worn smooth and shiney to a patina by many praying hands. Mexican turquoise in heavy settings of silver. In deep, old hand-carved frames were pictures, mottoes, wreaths of flowers all cunningly fashioned of human hair. . . . there were beaded moccasins and chamois coats, leather trousers, silver trimmed saddles, spurs and

knapsacks; great hand-carved chests and cupboards, Indian baskets and jars without number. So many things that were fine and splendid; so many things that were rude and clumsy, the Santa Fe market afforded (Russell 1954:55–56).

These two contemporaneous descriptions are revealing. The adult male perceived the Santa Fe market and its products in negative terms, while the young girl was quite taken with the exotic goods available there. Unfortunately, the former attitude was the one more frequently recorded by Anglo-Americans and has colored our view of the material culture of New Mexico—both locally produced goods and those shipped over the Camino Real from Mexico—at the end of the Spanish colonial and Mexican periods.

In contrast, the archaeological evidence combined with the wills and estate inventories reveal that at least some New Mexicans owned a wide variety of objects from Indian baskets and furniture made at Pecos Pueblo to silks and satins from Spain and the Orient. Others used locally made textiles such as jerga and buckskin clothing alongside sarapes from Saltillo and velvet suits. Still others had locally produced Pueblo ceramics along with a few pieces of Chinese porcelain and Mexican majolica. Home altars could include New Mexican-made paintings on buckskin in conjunction with paintings on canvas or engravings on paper from Mexico, often in fancy gilt frames. Many homes sported painted chests from Michoacán and one even had “a harp for playing.” The comfortable juxtaposition of fancy and rustic objects in New Mexican households—tainted as it may have been by the opinion of unappreciative Anglo-Americans in the nineteenth century—is a colonial tradition and not an invention of the twentieth-century “Santa Fe Style.” ♣

This paper has been adapted from an unpublished manuscript by Donna Pierce and Cordelia Thomas Snow, co-curators of the exhibit “Another Mexico: Spanish Life on the Upper Rio Grande,” on permanent display at the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe. They wish to acknowledge with deep appreciation Thomas E. Chavez, James E. Ivey, Keith Bakker, Robin Farwell Gavin, and others who aided and abetted their research.

NOTES

1. Equally as telling is the fact that as of this writing, of the more than 108,000 archaeological sites recorded in the New Mexico Cultural Resource Inventory System (NMCRI) at the Archaeological Records Management Section (ARMS) of the Historic Preservation Division, only 1,739 sites in New Mexico have been identified as Hispanic.
2. Keith Bakker was the first to point out to us the incorrect usage of the word “imported” when speaking of goods shipped over the Camino Real to New Mexico between 1598 and 1821. It was not until the Santa Fe Trail from the United States opened in 1821 that goods were truly “imported” to New Mexico, then part of the Mexican Republic.
3. Various inspections included in the Hammond and Rey volumes provide a tantalizing glimpse into what the colonists considered important to bring to New Mexico for settlement. See also Snow 1993a.
4. Quesada’s personal effects included a “four suits, one of purple velvet with a short cloak of pale green Castilian cloth.”
5. Unpublished documents, Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Tierras 3268, Proceso contra Gomez Robledo, 1662–1665. According to fray Angelico Chávez (1973:35–37), Francisco Gomez Robledo was the son of Francisco Gomez who came to Mexico with Alonso de Oñate, brother of Juan, in 1604. Gomez Robledo was mayordomo at the time he was accused of “Judaical tendencies” and taken to Mexico City to stand trial.
6. These documents, all from the Spanish Archives of New Mexico, are listed in the appendix. As time allows, the authors hope to extend their sample to include all extant wills and inventories to 1846.
7. Inventory of the estate of Catalina Duran, by José de Bustamante, Santa Fe, May 23, 1752. SANM I:243.
8. Esquibel (1994) examines the muster roll of individuals who reinforced the Vargas Reconquest of New Mexico. In addition to providing valuable genealogical data, Esquibel also lists the trades of those who accompanied fray Francisco Farfán (see Chapter 4).
9. In order to promote the declining iron industry in Spain during the seventeenth century, in 1621 the king forbade the importation of any iron except “that of Vizcaya” into New World ports. Although Simmons and Turley note that the prohibition was frequently violated, iron was always in short supply in New Mexico.

10. AGN, Tierras 3268, Gomez Robledo.
11. Taylor and Bokides (1987:16–22) confirm this observation on the basis of a numerical analysis of estate inventories without taking into account the Hispanic custom of sitting on stools, cushions, *estrados* (raised platforms), and carpets.
12. Initially, the authors were convinced that the burial suit could only have belonged to Diego de Vargas; however, as the result of the present study, the authors are now equally convinced that the burial suit could have belonged to practically any man in Santa Fe. In fact according to José Antonio Esquibel's research, seven of colonists who came to New Mexico with fray Francisco Farfán in 1694 listed their occupation as "tailor" (see Chapter 4 of this volume).
13. According to Espinosa (1970:17), these were "kimonos del Japon (Japan)." That phrase, however, does not appear in the original document. Other wills and inventories also mention "kimonos," but the country of origin is not specified. Actual kimonos from Japan could have been brought to Mexico via the Manila galleons and then on to New Mexico, or the word *kimono* could have been used at the time to describe some type of garment such as a robe or cape.
14. Those missions which had organs by 1641 were San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Nambe, Santo Domingo (which had "many musical instruments" in addition), Pecos, Galisteo, Chilili, Tajique, Cuarac (Quarai), Abó, Jemez, Zia, Sandia, Isleta, Alameda, and Acoma. Oraibi had a choir and "many musical instruments." Although not a mission, presumably the Parroquia in Santa Fe also had an organ.

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APPENDIX

The following wills and inventories were consulted. All can be found in the Spanish and Mexican Archives of New Mexico.

- SANM I:1027, will of Don Diego de Vargas Zapata Lújan de Leon, Marques de la Nava de Brazinas, Bernalillo, April 7, 1704.
 SANM I:235, will of Juana Domiguez, Santa Fe, 1717.
 SANM I:13, inventory of the estate of Captain Juan de Archibeque, Santa Fe, September 6, 1721.
 SANM I:83, will of Diego Manuel Baca, Santa Fe, March 23, 1727.
 SANM I:1219, will of Francisco de Jesus y Espexo, Albuquerque, June 5, 1733.
 SANM I:177, inventory and partition of the estate of Captain Pedro de Chávez, from his first marriage, Albuquerque, 1736.
 SANM I:88, will of Cristoval Baca, Santa Fe, April 24, 1739. [Diego Manuel Baca and Cristoval were brothers, both of whom had ranches in La Ciénega.]
 SANM I:964, inventory of the estate of José de Reano de Tagle, Santa Fe, April 16, 1743.
 SANM I:27, will of Antonio Tafolla Altamirano, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, February 18, 1744.
 SANM I:26, will of Vicente de Armijo [son of Catalina Duran], Santa Fe, November 15, 1743.
 SANM I:530, inventory of the estate of Margarita Martín, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, August 8, 1744.
 SANM I:94, will of Josepha Baca, San Felipe de Alburquerque, June 10, 1746.
 SANM I:341, 342, inventory of the estate of Luis Garcia Noriega, San Felipe de Alburquerque, January 29, 1747.
 SANM I:240, inventory of the estate of Antonio Duran de Armijo [oldest son of Catalina Duran, brother of Vicente, father of Maria Gertrudis Duran de Armijo], San Geronimo de Taos, August 1, 1748.
 SANM I:968, will of Lugarda Quintana, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, May 12, 1749. [According to Chávez, Lugarda’s father, Miguel, was a poet and composer of coloquios.]
 SANM I:351, inventory of the estate of Maria Diega Garduno, Santa Fe, May 20, 1752.
 SANM I:193, inventory of the estate of Juana Galbana, Zia, May 7, 1753.
 SANM I:1055, will of Juan Montes Vigil [father-in-law of Gertrudis Armijo], Santa Fe, April 30, 1762.
 SANM I:104, inventory of the estate of Tomasa Benavides, Santa Fe, May 4, 1762.
 SANM II:***, inventory of the estate of Juana Luján, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, July 15–August 22, 1762.
 SANM I:559, inventory of the estate of Gertrudis Martín, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, August 9, 1762.

- SANM I:246, will and deposition of the estate of Manuel Duran de Armijo [son of Vicente], Bernalillo (San Felipe de Alburquerque), February 12, 1765.
- SANM I:781, inventory of the estate of Francisco Romero, alias 'Talache Coyote,' Taos, 1765.
- SANM I:197, will of Maria Chávez, N. S. de la Soledad del Rio Arriba [jurisdiction of San Juan], May 2, 1765.
- SANM I:42, will of Joaquin de Alderete, Santa Fe, [resident of El Paso del Norte], April 9, 1767.
- SANM I:49, will of Lazaro Atencio, Chama [Abiquiu], August 1, 1767.
- SANM I:654, inventory of the estate of Manuel Olguin, Santa Fe, November 8, 1767.
- SANM I:1231, Lawsuit: Captain Antonio Baca vs. José Baca, Santa Fe, February 4, 1768.
Document includes the will of José Baca, Santa Fe [Pajarito], August 29, 1766.
- SANM I:***, will of Domingo de Venabides, Santa Fe, May 8, 1770.
- SANM I:590, division of the property of Monica Tomasa Martín, Taos, May 20, 1770.
- SANM I:793, inventory of the estate of Juan Phelipe de Rivera, Santa Fe, August 25, 1770.
- SANM I:792, will of Miguel Romero, Our Lady of Guadalupe (Cañada de Cochiti), ***, ***, 1771.
- SANM I:117, will of José Baca, Pueblo Quemado (Santa Fe), March 2, 1772.
- SANM I:48, inventory of the estate of Gertrudis Armijo, Taos, March 26, 1776.
- SANM I:997, inventory and partition of the estate of Calletano Torres, San Antonio de Sabinal, April 25, 1780.
- SANM I:1060, inventory of the estate of Manuel Vigil [husband of Gertrudis Armijo], Taos and Santa Fe, October 13, 1780.
- SANM I:250, inventory of the estate of José Duran y Chávez ("who died at the hands of the barbarous enemies"), Bernalillo, March 10, 1783.
- SANM I:280, inventory of the estate of Juan Antonio Fernandez, Santa Fe, April 27, 1784.
- SANM I:661, will of Antonio Ortega, Santa Fe, December 6, 1785.
- SANM I:598, will of José Maldonado [paymaster and second lieutenant of the presidio], June 9, 1789.
- SANM I:31, lawsuit concerning the estate of Alonso Real de Aguilar, Santa Fe, 1791.
- SANM I:54, inventory and partition of the estate of Salvador Armijo (killed by Apaches), Santa Fe, September 22, 1803.
- SANM I:252, inventory of the estate of Manuel Delgado, Santa Fe, September 14, 1815.
- SANM I:704, inventory and partition of the estate of José Martín Padilla (will executed November 18, 1812), Santa Fe, 1817.
- SANM I:144 and 146, will and distribution of the estate of Maria Micaela Baca, Santa Fe, May 14, 1832.
- SANM I:908, will of Maria Guadalupe Sanchez, Santa Fe, 1833 or 1834.
- SANM I:912, inventory of the estate of Manuel Sanchez, Santa Fe, May 15, 1839.
- SANM I:1233, will of Tomas Viveros, August 2, 1843.
- Alvarez Papers, State Records Center and Archives, will of Manuel Alvarez, Santa Fe, March 6, 1858.
- Severino Martinez Papers, Minge Collection, State Records Center and Archives.

Trade Fairs in Taos

Prehistory to 1821

Elizabeth Cunningham and Skip Miller



When the Indian trading embassy comes to these governors and their alcaldes, here all prudence forsakes them . . . because the fleet is in. The fleet being, in this case, some two hundred, or at the very least, fifty tents of the barbarous Indians (Kenner 1969:37).

GRAY SMOKE ROSE from the many campfires as the smell of sizzling buffalo meat and baking bread from the *hornos* (ovens) filled the air. Brilliant aspen leaves glinted with autumnal gold, reflecting sunlight like mirrors from Taos Mountain. Hundreds of brightly colored Apache, Ute, and Comanche tepees dotted the valley, contrasting with the massive adobe walls of Taos Pueblo. Occasional whinnies from hundreds of horses, grazing on lush green grass in the distance, and the barking of camp dogs punctuated the chatter of many tongues—Spanish, Tiwa, Athabaskan. Voices rose in excitement as the haggling over buffalo hides, trade cloth, horses, buckskin, rifles, and captives began.

The exhilaration of horse races, competitions, dancing, feasting, gambling and carousing mingled with trade negotiations, making this scene of raucous revelry every bit as lively as the later mountain man rendezvous. Yet, at the Taos trade fair there was always an underlying tension, as taut as a strung bow. For even though the *paz de Dios* (peace of God) spread a protective umbrella of truce, the peace could be shattered in an instant just by insulting the Comanches.

When the [Comanches] are on their good behavior, or at peace, they enter Taos to trade. At this fair they sell buffalo hides, horses, mules, buffalo meat, pagan Indians (of both sexes, children and adults) whom they capture from other nations. . . . They also sell good guns, pistols, powder, balls, tobacco, hatchets, and some vessels of yellow tin. . . . They are great traders, for as soon as they buy anything, they usually sell exactly what they bought; and usually they keep losing, the occasion when they gain being very rare, because our people ordinarily play infamous tricks on them. In short, the trading day resembles a second-hand market in Mexico, the way people mill about (Bailey 1966:81; also Kessell 1990:406).

Fray Francisco Dominguez wrote this contemporaneous account of the Taos trade fair following his *visita* (a formal religious or civil inspection of a jurisdiction) to northern New Mexico in 1776. His report on the missions alludes to the people and trade patterns already in place in the Spanish province in the eighteenth century.

INTRODUCTION

In 1598 don Juan de Oñate, New Mexico's founder and first governor, opened the Camino Real to settlers. The mission and merchant caravans supplied the seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and early nineteenth-century settlers of northern New Mexico with livestock, agricultural products, tools, and furnishings from New Spain. These supplies, essential for the settlement of the region, also provided trade goods to exchange with the Pueblo people and Plains Indians.

The northernmost terminus of the Camino Real was Taos. The importance of this settlement to the Camino Real lay in the trade which had already been established between the native people since at least AD 1100. Of all pueblos, Taos had the closest ties with Plains Indians. Indeed in material culture and dress, according to the findings of anthropologist Alfred Kroeber, Taos was "half Plains." Taos Pueblo people used bows, arrows, lances, moccasins, and buckskin clothing from the Plains Indians. They also adapted ceremonies such as the buffalo dance and the war dance, which was called the "Comanche dance." Plains character also appeared in many of the songs at Taos Pueblo. In the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century Taos people continued to be influenced by contact with Kiowa and Comanche people.¹ These well-established trade relationships and strong ties with other Indian groups, along with easy access to the Plains, made Taos the northern terminus of the Camino Real, a logical place for trade fairs between Spanish and Indian peoples.

From the Spanish entrada in 1540 to the Mexican Republic period, Taos maintained its position as an important trade center. During this period historical events influenced and changed the patterns of trade. To understand the trade policies connected with the Camino Real, it is essential to understand the political climate and the cultural contention and conflict caused by the imposition of Spanish rule and society.

TAOS PUEBLO AND EARLY TRADE PATTERNS

This mission [Taos] is the last of this Holy Custodia, twelve leagues north from Picuris and is the first one to which most of the tribes come together for their fairs which are governed by the moon and which the Governor of the Kingdom and the lieutenant-governor attend with many vecinos [citizens] and soldiers (Grant 1983:26).

This first-person account written by Fray Manuel de San Nepomuceno y Trigo on July 23, 1754, sets the time and place for the Taos trade fair, the largest and most important of the annual trade fairs between the Indians and the New Mexicans in the height of the Spanish colonial period. Taos was the beginning point for gathering trade items that were then reassembled in caravans in Santa Fe to be shipped to other towns in New Spain.

Pueblo Indians of Taos and later the Spanish played the role of middlemen and carried on trade in spite of "official" Spanish rules regarding commerce. From the 1350s to the 1700s the three most powerful and substantial trade pueblos of northern New Mexico were Taos, Picuris (located just off NM 75, near present-day Peñasco), and Pecos (located on the Santa Fe Trail, 4 miles north of I-25 on NM 63, 20 miles northeast of Santa Fe). Each pueblo had a point of entry through mountain gaps that made them accessible from the plains east of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

Taos Pueblo, the most northern of the Rio Grande pueblos, was the northern and eastern frontier of the Pueblo world. Like Picuris and Pecos, its strategic location made possible trade with mountain,

eastern, and intermontane tribes. Plains tribes had access to the Taos Valley via Indian trails. Utes and their predecessors came from the north through present-day Fort Garland, Colorado (present-day NM 522). The Plains tribes, among them various bands of Apaches and, later, Comanches, had access via Palo Flechado and Taos Canyon from present-day Cimarron, New Mexico (NM 64), and through Miranda Canyon, connecting with neighboring Picurís Pueblo to the south (the northern leg of the Camino Real). Through these trade routes Taos had on-going, albeit periodic, contact and exchange with various Pueblo, Mountain, and Plains tribes, the latter being precursors of the (Mountain) Ute and Shoshonean (Comanche) people, and (Plains) Kiowa, Apache, and Navajo (for further information, see Ortiz 1979; Simmons 1991; Woosley 1980; and especially John 1996).

From prehistoric times, the isolated Taos Valley at the southern base of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains has been the site of interaction and contact between diverse and unrelated peoples. The earliest evidence of interaction among the Rio Grande and Plains cultures dates to approximately AD 950–1000 when the first permanent settlements appeared in the Taos area. These early homes were deep pithouses with artifact assemblages representing both Western Anasazi and Plains cultures. Incised decorations on Anasazi vessel forms were found in these pithouses. Incised designs, typical of Plains ceramics, date to as early as 1000 BC. This distinctly Plains-decorated pottery in Taos points to both trade and cultural interchange and sets the stage for trade in the Taos Valley.

The first permanent inhabitants were probably some combination of ancestral Pueblo people from the Mesa Verde area, an indigenous population of hunter-gatherers, and Plains people. These early residents of the Taos Valley were dependent primarily on hunting and gathering. The nearby mountains teemed with game animals—elk, deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and squirrel; mountain streams were full of native trout; and the high plateau and mountain valleys produced an abundance of antelope and rabbits. To augment their diet, the local inhabitants gathered wild plants, among them wild onions, piñon (pine) nuts, juniper berries, cactus fruits, osha (wild celery), and sage.

According to archaeological evidence, the inhabitants of Taos planted strains of domestic plants such as corn, beans, squash, and sunflowers that were adapted to the temperature and growing season of Taos. Then as today, the vagaries of the weather in the high, cool Taos Valley made the growing of corn and beans risky at best. Compared with the southern pueblos, Taos is considered only marginally appropriate for agriculture because of the short growing season and high elevation. Thus, the people were dependent on hunting and gathering.

This new frontier lifestyle spread from the Taos Valley out onto the Plains. By AD 1200 Plains people had established pueblo-style settlements near Raton Mountain (near present-day Raton, New Mexico). The pottery at those sites is decorated in the style of Taos black-on-white wares. In addition, varieties of corn appear which previously had been identified only in the Rio Grande Valley.

Contacts with Plains peoples increased markedly after 1300, and by the mid-fourteenth century the strategically located pueblos at Taos, Picurís, and Pecos were established. These pueblos controlled lands which formed natural trading centers. They were situated between the fertile, settled agricultural valley of the Río Grande and the mountain passes of the Southern Rockies, which led to buffalo hunting grounds on the Plains grasslands.

Buffalo hunting probably originally brought the Taos Pueblo people into contact with the Plains tribes, and eventually led to Taos Pueblos establishing themselves as middlemen for trade in buffalo-related products. Consequently the role of middlemen, which continued in some form in Taos well into the nineteenth century, also had its roots in prehistoric times.

Prior to the coming of the Spanish, typical products traded between the Rio Grande Pueblos and the Plains Indians were pottery, cotton blankets, turquoise, corn, beans, piñon nuts and other foodstuffs, which were exchanged for buffalo robes, deer and antelope skins, jerked (dried) buffalo

meat, tallow, and salt.

Early Spanish reports indicate that these trade practices were already well established by the time of the entrada. In the fall of 1598 while exploring the Canadian River area of south-central Colorado, Oñate's nephew, Vincente de Zaldivar, met native people from Taos and Picurís returning from the Plains carrying buffalo hides, meat, tallow, and salt on their backs. They had exchanged these wares for cotton blankets, pottery, maize, and small green stones. At Pecos Pueblo Juan de Ortega, one of Oñate's captains, witnessed the arrival of the "Vaqueros" with hides, meat, and tallow packed on dogs. These Plains Apaches set up camp and proceeded to trade their wares for maize and blankets.

Contact between these various indigenous groups fluctuated between friendly trade and raiding. Hostilities often occurred, based in part on rivalries or the need for revenge. Another cause was the abundance or scarcity of food sources. In times of plenty, trade was friendly. However, in times of drought, the Plains peoples raided the pueblos for stores of corn put by for lean times. These alternating periods of peace and war continued up through the nineteenth century.

SPANISH MATERIAL CULTURE AND INDIAN TRADE GOODS

With the Spanish entrada, the world of the Pueblo and Plains Indians was changed forever. The Spanish introduced technology and material culture that offered a wider variety of food sources and broader choice of clothing and articles than previously available. They brought livestock—horses, oxen, cattle, sheep, pigs, and chickens—as well as fruit trees and new types of grain and vegetables, carts and saddlery, iron tools and forges to fashion them with, and weapons.

The Spanish also introduced a new system of land use and government and a new religion. The Indians found the material goods beneficial and readily accepted them. Yet there was a price to pay: the colonial government, Roman Catholicism and the mission system, and European diseases wreaked havoc on Indian culture. These factors were a source of conflict which caused continued Indian resistance, and ultimately resulted in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

Of the Spanish imports, horses and guns created the most powerful changes for the Pueblos and Plains Indians. With the horse came mobility, which allowed the Indians to follow buffalo herds and hunt game animals, thus alleviating the constant threat of hunger. Combined with guns, the horse transformed small bands of hunter-gatherers into formidable military powers (especially the Comanche) comparable to the Mongols on the Asian steppes.

In the 1620s Pueblo Indians became herdsmen for New Mexico settlers. In the following two decades, when tribal members from Taos and Picurís fled the cruelties of Spanish serfdom, they took horses with them to El Cuartelejo, a Plains Apache settlement (near the present-day border of Kansas and Colorado). There they taught the Apaches equestrian skills. In 1650, in continued resistance to the Spaniards, the Pueblos plotted to deliver "droves" of Spanish horses to their Apache allies and trade partners. With the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, the Pueblos kept all of the livestock left behind when the Spanish settlers fled, and traded horses to the Apaches. These original "Masters of the Plains" then built horse herds of their own. The Apaches traded horses with the Kiowa people, who in turn traded with the Comanches. By 1760 the Comanches, known by then as "The Horse People," had such a wealth of horses (horse herds for each band numbered in the thousands) that they traded them to New Mexican settlers, Pueblos, and other Plains Indians at the Taos trade fairs.

The initial livestock arrived with the colonizing expedition of don Juan de Oñate in 1598. The founder and first governor of New Mexico led Franciscan friars, soldiers, and an emigrant train of settlers—numbering 130 men, some with their wives and children—to the Española Valley where they established the village of San Gabriel. They brought horses, mules, oxen, beef cattle, goats, sheep,

and pigs totaling 7,000 head as well as transportation vehicles—wagons, carts, and carriages—and farming implements. Oñate's list of supplies requested from Conde de Galve in Mexico in January 1694 adds further details regarding the provisions needed for colonization. Oñate sets the ideal number of colonists at 500 and requests 12 head of cattle, 100 sheep and goats, 10 mares and 1 stallion, 1 plowshare, 1 ax, 2 hoes, and 1 iron shovel per settler, saying "all [these things] are necessary for the equipment of this land and the new world because without them it will be impossible that the said settlers remain permanently" (Bailey 1940).

The items brought by a soldier would have overlapped to some degree with the domestic items shared by the colonists. Domestic items included a bed, mattress, blankets, sheets, pillows, towels, soap; cooking implements: knives, grinding stone, pots and pans, pewter ware, brass mortar; clothing: ready-made cordovan and calfskin boots and shoes, hats, doublets, linen breeches, linen shirts, waistcoats, sleeves and garters, and articles to make and repair clothing including various shades of Castilian and monk's cloth, needles, thimbles, scissors, silk thread, ribbons and buttons; tack items: saddles, bridles, halters, girths, cruppers, currycombs, horseshoes, nails and horseshoe tools. Other items were more suited to military life: a coat of mail, cuisses, jacket and other metal armor, and leather horse armor as well as harquebus, powder and shot, various lances, a sword and dagger (D. Snow 1993).

Wealthy colonists could afford luxury goods such as clothing made from silk, damask, and velvet; elegant hats set with pearls and stones; bed clothes of damask trimmed in lace or with gold and silk; silver tableware; pipes of wine; jewelry of pearls and fine stones; and silver pesos (C. Snow 1993). These goods were products of aristocratic Spain, and while fashionable, they proved impractical for life on the frontier. By 1602 many of the Oñate colonists were clad in *gamuza* (buckskin) acquired through trade with the Pueblos. Buckskin was not only more economical than imported cloth, it was warmer and more durable. However, luxury clothing was still acquired by the aristocrats and wealthy colonists. It represented their increasingly remote connection to Spain and was an important status symbol in the New World.

A list of mission supply goods completes the variety of items the Spanish introduced into Indian cultures. Crosses, paintings, vestments, statues, and silver vessels supplied the needs for church services. Other supplies outfitted the infirmary, the mission workshop, and the kitchen. Foodstuffs for the kitchen included a massive amount of bacon, cheese, dried fish, flour, corn, dried beans and peas, vinegar, wine, sugar, conserves, raisins, almonds, onions and garlic, salt and spices. Additionally, each friar was issued clothing, bedding and items for personal use on the frontier such as storage chests, brass wash basins, axes, lanterns and lamp oil, candles, drinking jugs, wine bottles, awls, paper, knives, and rosaries (Ivey 1993). The latter two items were often used for trade with the Indians. An account by sergeant major Juan de Ulibarrí in 1706 shows that the Indians ascribed particular power to rosaries. When the officer went to the Apache village of El Cuartelejo to escort Picuris people back to their pueblos, he noticed that Apaches in the various villages wore crosses, rosaries, and Catholic medals around their necks. The Indians related these medals to Spanish valor and wore them for their power (Kenner 1969:25).

One of the earliest reports to delineate some of the indigenous trade goods was written by Gaspar Castaña de Sosa in 1591. He verifies the crops that were later both exchanged with the colonists and shipped from the northern provinces via the Camino Real to the southern provinces of New Spain, where they were exchanged for manufactured and luxury goods. He mentions maize and beans of many colors; storerooms of herbs, greens, and squash; and varieties of pottery—red, varicolored, and black—in the form of plates, bowls, and cups. In recording the dress of the people, he not only listed trade goods but also showed surprise at finding the Indians so well clothed:

The dress we saw there was for winter. Most if not all the men wore cotton blankets and on top of these a buffalo hide. Some covered their privy parts with small cloths, very elegant and finely worked. The women wore a blanket tied at the shoulder and open on one side and a sash a span wide around the waist. Over this they put on another blanket, very elegantly worked, or turkey-feather cloaks and many other novel things—all of which for barbarians is remarkable (Kessell 1990:55).

Mantas (cotton blankets) and hides were in high demand, not only for clothing the colonists, but more particularly as valuable trade items to other areas of New Spain.

Cross-cultural exchange took place not only among the Native American peoples, but also between the colonists and the Native Americans. Colonists adapted clothing, foodstuffs, and survival technologies, and Pueblos adapted livestock, agricultural methods and products, and European technology. Trade worked in two ways: not only were trade items exchanged, ideas and customs were adapted which changed each culture.

THE MISSIONS (1598–1680)

The seventeenth-century missions were major colonizing forces within the province. As the friars controlled the caravans which traveled the Camino Real, they were also the mainstay of Nuevo Mexico. Within the provinces during most of the Spanish colonial period, the economic system consisted of simple barter. Only about 1790, when the region began to prosper, did it change to a cash economy. The merchandise sent south for trade consisted of indigenous products such as hides, woven goods, and produce of the land, and these were procured, made, or grown by the Pueblo people.

In order to assemble enough trade goods to exchange for manufactured and luxury goods from Chihuahua and other southern towns, the missionaries, governors, and political officials and the more wealthy colonists exploited the Pueblos under two systems: *repartimiento*, a system of forced labor, and *encomiendo*, the right to exact tribute from the native people (Simmons 1991; for extensive discussion see Gutiérrez 1991).

According to rank and length of service to Spain, some of the early colonists were rewarded by the Crown's transference to them of the right to collect tribute in maize (corn) and cotton blankets from each Indian household. These encomenderos promulgated the attitudes of the European feudal system: peons worked for the privileged class, and in exchange the privileged class was responsible for the peons' spiritual welfare and personal safety in times of war.

The imposition of these systems on the Pueblos changed initially friendly relations into resentment and, finally, bitter hatred. At first the Pueblos had made generous gifts of grain from their storehouses. This voluntary sharing grew out of friendship, but soon it no longer satisfied the Spanish. When enforced levies and taxes of the encomiendo system were imposed on Pueblo agricultural products and woven goods, they created hardships among the people. The surplus grain supply, which the Pueblos stored against drought, was expropriated by the friars and the encomenderos. The Pueblo people then were left with no grain to trade with nomadic tribes, and at times this shortage caused them to die of starvation.

Under the repartimiento system the Pueblos were enlisted to build churches and provide other labor for the friars, government officials, and encomenderos. They were recruited to herd livestock, till and tend the fields, procure firewood, and work as servants in Spanish households. In order to do this, the Pueblos were forced to neglect their own household work and crops. Under Spanish law the native people were to receive monetary compensation for their labor and could only work for a



Fig. 6.1

Elk hide detail. Courtesy Thomas Gilcrease, Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa.

limited time period. Legalities were, however, far removed from reality. The Indians suffered many abuses. They were often unpaid and kept on as laborers for a longer time than regulations permitted.

Cruelty, brought on by greed for trade merchandise, caused further ill-will among the Pueblos. In the 1630s and 1660s, the insatiable hunger for profit of Governors Luis Rosas and Lopez de Mendizábal drove them to create sweatshops in which Pueblo and captive Apache and Ute people were forced to manufacture leather garments and weave blankets and other textiles for trade. The governors took Pueblo men and Spanish soldiers and citizens away from their work to send them on slave raids to the Plains. Rosas especially undermined Franciscan efforts to christianize the Pueblos by promising the Pueblo of Pecos that he would allow them to revive their traditional dances if they would bring him more blankets and hides. Manifests listing trade goods belonging to Rosas in 1639, and Mendizábal in 1660, show painted buffalo hides, chamois skins, elk and deer hides numbering in the thousands, and large quantities of woolen blankets and leather breeches, jackets, and shirts.

Beginning with Rosas, the New Mexican governors controlled the trade fairs and the subsequent dealing in slaves. Under the rule of Governor Luis Rosas, which began in 1637, the Spanish *rescate* (ransom) paid for Indian captives increased dramatically. The practice made bitter and formidable enemies of the nomadic tribes, especially the Apache, and was the primary cause of hostilities for the next two centuries.

As if life were not already difficult for the Pueblos, New Mexico in the mid-1600s experienced a series of harsh winters and devastating droughts which caused widespread famine among both Indians and Spanish. The resulting diminished food supply, the impact of European diseases, and the mistreatment of native people by Spanish colonists and clergy resulted in open animosity and ultimately in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

THE PUEBLO REVOLT AND THE SPANISH RECONQUEST

For more than twelve years the Spanish were kept out of northern New Mexico. With the Spanish gone, Taos Pueblo regained control of the trade fairs, and relationships established prior to the Spanish entrada were resumed with the Plains Indians. Despite the Pueblo hatred of all things Spanish, European livestock and agricultural products and technologies merged with the indigenous material culture to produce a broader range of trade items throughout the Indian world.

With the Reconquest in 1694 and throughout the eighteenth century, Spanish policy regarding the Indians alternated between confrontation and pacification. The Spanish government took control of colonists dealing with Indians and maintained control of the monopoly on trade. This was reflected in various *bandos* (governmental decrees) which, for example, forbade the bartering of arms to the Pueblo Indians in 1695, and banned the sale of arms and trade to non-Christian Indians in 1735, 1737, and 1739 (specifically directed against Miguel de Salazar, resident of the jurisdiction of Taos and Picurís, for illegal trade with the Comanches). A bando in 1778 prohibited trade with the Utes, followed by court proceedings against residents of northern New Mexico in 1783 and 1785 for illicit trade with the Utes.

From the eighteenth century until Mexican Independence in 1821, Chihuahua merchants controlled trade. They held New Mexican vecinos in economic thrall by setting low values on bartered goods from the province and charging inflated prices for European and Mexican manufactured goods. New Mexico had no hard currency, and the barter system became more complex in the second half of the eighteenth century when Mexican merchants introduced a monetary system.

THE FRENCH

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, French trade goods, especially guns, powder, flint, and shot, were being exchanged at the annual Taos trade fair. These came via the Pawnees, trading partners of the French. The Pawnees in turn traded with the Comanches, and the Comanches brought goods to Taos which were traded in turn to the Pueblos, other Plains groups, and the New Mexicans. Despite bandos prohibiting the sale of weapons to the Indians, the New Mexican vecinos were dependent on trade with the Comanches to acquire the very guns they were to use in their defense against the Comanches and other hostile Indian raiders.

Desiring to retain their monopoly in the provinces, the Spanish colonial government specifically prohibited foreign trade. Therefore rumors of Frenchmen among the Indians on the eastern Plains alarmed the Spanish officials. The first report of French intrusion came in 1726 when Apaches, fleeing the Comanches, reported Frenchmen among the war party. Other accounts followed in 1727: Taos Indians and Comanche prisoners described white men dressed in red who cooked in copper pots near Cuartelejo, and the Jicarilla Apaches sighted a Frenchman in Cuartelejo. The brothers Pierre and Paul Mallet were the first traders from Louisiana Territory to cross the Sangre de Cristos. Reaching Taos, they began trading there only to be seized by Spanish officials who confiscated their goods. In the ensuing years other enterprising Frenchmen ventured into New Mexico to trade. Although some were successful in evading the authorities, especially in Taos, the French traders who were caught routinely had their goods confiscated, and many were prevented from returning to Louisiana.

Those who were successful in avoiding detection by civil authorities profited from contraband trade with settlers hungry for manufactured goods. The inventory of merchandise seized from Jean Chapuis and Luis Feuilli by Governor Tomás Vélez Cachupín in 1752 reveals the types of goods used in the North American interior in the mid-eighteenth century. Among the more unusual or expensive items were fabrics: flowered silk, muslin, lace, and lace over black silk. More common fabrics included various kinds of woolen material, linen cloth, and spotted, bordered, white, or brown cotton fabric along with various colors of ribbon. Articles of clothing included beaver hats, woolen and cotton caps, shoes, gloves, and handkerchiefs of cotton and silk. Sewing notions included skeins and boxes of cotton and silk thread, and buttons. Among the miscellaneous items were sealing wax, copper candlesticks, puzzles, horn and ivory combs, mirrors, and a bullfighter's cape. Since many of these were either not available from the merchants in Chihuahua or were prohibitively expensive, it is no wonder that settlers were willing to take risks to obtain them.

The threat of French invasion ended in 1762 when France ceded the Louisiana Territory to Spain (although it was reacquired by France shortly before the Louisiana Purchase). But the greater threat proved to be the Plains Indians, particularly the Comanches, who nearly wiped out the New Mexican province in the 1770s. Therefore Spanish concern regarding French trade of arms and ammunition to the Comanches was warranted. In 1750 Governor Tomás Vélez Cachupín had informed the viceroy of his fears: "The trade that the French are developing with the Comanches by means of the Jumanos will in time result in grave injury to this province" (Kessell 1990:357). He also realized the importance of maintaining New Mexican commerce with the Comanche, and in 1754 he instructed his successor to maintain Comanche trade dependence on Spanish goods. Vélez Cachupín feared that otherwise this invaluable trade source would be lost entirely to the French.

THE COMANCHES

The first documented report of Comanches trading at Taos was in 1706. These fierce Plains warriors, who nearly crippled the growth and economy of the province of New Mexico, were to dominate the Taos trade fairs until the beginning of the nineteenth century.



Fig. 6.2

Taos Country. By Oscar Berninghaus. Courtesy Woolaroc Museum, Bartlesville, OK.

In a letter to the viceroy in 1750, Governor Tomás Vélez Cachupín explained the nature of trade relationships with the Comanches:

Although the Comanche nation carries on a like trade with us, coming to the pueblo of Taos, where they hold their fairs and trade in skins and Indians of various nations, whom they enslave in their wars, for horses, mares, mules, hunting knives, and other trifles, always, whenever the occasion offers for stealing horses or attacking the pueblos of Pecos and Galisteo, they do not pass it up (Kessell 1990:357).

In 1754 Vélez Cachupín wrote instructions to his successor, Francisco Antonio Marín del Valle. This brilliant document shows Vélez Cachupín to have been both an excellent leader and a shrewd diplomat, aware of the shortcomings and human foibles of both the Spanish settlers and the Pueblo Indians under his administration. It also sheds light on the changes in the political climate under his strong rule, and the continued importance of Indian trade to the New Mexican province.

Vélez Cachupín urged del Valle to maintain friendship with the Indians because of the trade benefits good relations brought to the people of the province: without peace the settlements “can not conserve themselves of their neighborhoods, or increase their haciendas engaged in raising cattle, sheep, and horses.” Further, he spoke to the settlers’ dependence on the trade in hides to purchase goods for their families in the towns of La Vizcaya and Sonora, the trade centers located at the southern terminus of the Camino Real. “Without this trade they could not provide for themselves, for they have no other commerce than that of these skins.” Here Vélez Cachupín points out the interdependence which had developed between the Indians and the settlers, stating that when there is war, there is no trade, and without trade the settlers would perish.

Vélez Cachupín also outlined the peace policy he had carefully woven between the Spanish and the Utes, Chaguaguas, and Payuches as well as the Comanches. In order to maintain the peace and prevent devastating Indian raids and attacks, he urged del Valle to "Protect them in their commerce and do them justice whenever advantage may be taken of them by these settlers."

Vélez Cachupín also discussed his trade policies and the importance of the governor's attendance at trade fairs, to be present to intervene and settle any altercations that arose. The Plains Indians, particularly the Comanches, found "much satisfaction in observing that any appeal for justice is met at once." He stressed the need for equitable dealings at the Taos trade fair between the settlers, the Pueblos, and the Plains people, in his advice regarding the Comanche:

Use the greatest effort and observe faithfully whatever conduces to pleasing their spirits without permitting, on the occasions when they come to trade at the pueblo of Taos, the settlers and Pueblo Indians, who also attend, to do them the slightest injury. They suffer from many extortions, such as robbing them of their skins or some horses or other priceless possession, which for them is very serious and stirs their animosity (Thomas 1940:133).

Vélez Cachupín understood the workings of the Indian mind. He warned his successor that the Indians would test the qualities of the incoming governor, "as they are very shrewd," and therefore cautioned him to be vigilant and always to show strength and honor for these were traits that the Comanches admired. He also pointed out that a lack of protection and security at the Taos trade fair on the part of the previous governor had created resentment among the Comanches which had caused them to seek revenge, resuming murderous attacks on Spanish settlers and the Pueblos. To keep the peace, Vélez Cachupín specified the measures del Valle must take in treating with the Comanches. He instructed him to adorn himself in splendor and to surround himself with "a suitable guard," at the same time putting the *rancherías* (encampments) and horse herds under military protection to make the Indians feel secure. The next piece of advice shows Vélez Cachupín to have been a masterful negotiator:

At the moment of your arrival at the fair . . . your grace will have the chiefs called and receive them with every kindness and affection. Sit down with them and command tobacco for them so that they may smoke, as is their custom. Afterwards your grace will make them understand that they are welcome, using various expressions of friendship and confidence which discretion and wisdom suggest to learn their desires and give them a favorable opinion of the advisability of continuing their tranquility and to inspire affection for the person of your grace. This should always be done with an appearance of pleasure and agreeableness, which they also esteem highly (Thomas 1940:134).

Vélez Cachupín also set a standard of trade that was upheld with minor changes through the remainder of the 1700s. He decreed values assigned to both Comanche and Spanish trade items. For example, a tanned buffalo hide was worth one Spanish *beldique* (or iron broadknife), two buffalo robes could be exchanged for a lower-quality bridle decorated with red trade cloth, and a French-made pistol brought a better-quality Spanish bridle. High values were placed on slaves: an Indian girl captive was worth a she-mule and scarlet *bayeta* (baize, a type of woolen textile) trade cloth, or two good horses with trifles thrown in such as a short cloak or a horse cloth (Kessell 1990).

The Comanche patterns of raid and trade were unfathomable to the Spanish. In 1772 Governor Pedro Fermin de Mendinueta commented on a murderous attack, followed by the Comanche

expectation to trade immediately afterward: "The Comanches did not find it inconvenient to present themselves peacefully at Taos to trade their buffalo skins, horses, mules, some gun and captives in exchange for bridles, awls, knives, colored cloth and maize, from which the settlers of the province benefitted" (Kenner 1969:47).

From 1774 to 1777 the Comanches, led by Cuerno Verde, a ferocious leader with a grudge against New Mexicans for the death of his father, launched a massive assault against the colonists and Pueblo Indians. They raided horses and sheep, killed cattle, destroyed crops, and murdered and pillaged Spanish homes and Pueblo fortresses. In 1775 losses totaled up to six Pueblos and settlers for every Comanche. New Mexicans couldn't retaliate because of the lack of horses and guns.

In 1778 Juan Bautista de Anza became governor. A brilliant military strategist, he decided to arrange for an alliance with the Comanches by pitting them against their old enemies, the Apaches. A year after his arrival in New Mexico, he launched a surprise attack against Cuerno Verde ("Green Horn") in present-day Colorado and killed him and all his warriors. In 1781 de Anza's troops repulsed Comanche attacks in New Mexico with such force that the Indians solicited peace at Taos Pueblo. Since there were so many bands of Comanches, the peace wasn't agreed upon until some of the dissenting leaders were overcome.

De Anza negotiated a lasting peace with the Comanche leader, Ecueraçapa, in 1786 at Pecos. Following the lead of his predecessor, Vélez Cachupín, Governor de Anza granted the Comanche request for the establishment of fairs and free trade at Pecos. In order to ensure peace at the trade fairs, he initiated a new trading policy:

Then on the ground designated for the fair he marked out two lines so that the contracting parties, each positioned on the outside of one, could exhibit and hand over to each other in the space between whatever goods they had to exchange. With this arrangement, the presence of that chief [Governor Anza], the opportune positioning of troops, official overseers, and the abolition of the abusive contributions that the latter used to charge the heathens as a fee for permission to trade, this fair took place in ideal calm and good order.

The Comanches exchanged at it more than 600 skins, many loads of meat and tallow, 15 horses, and 3 muskets to their entire satisfaction, without experiencing the slightest affront (Kessell 1990:406).

De Anza also agreed to allow the Comanches to move closer to New Mexico, but in return they were to hold the promise to be peaceful toward Spain and all Indian allies. De Anza also followed the guidelines for preventing hostilities set forth by Bernardo de Gálvez, viceroy of New Spain. The official instructions stated that former peace treaties had failed because they held no "advantages" for the Indians. Accordingly de Anza instituted two new policies: granting the Comanches the right to air their grievances with the governor in Santa Fe, and giving the Indians annual gifts. The latter strategy, as Gálvez pointed out, cost less than what "is now spent in considerable and useless reinforcements of troops" (Kenner 1969:53).

De Anza's successor, Governor Fernando de la Concha, guarded the Comanche peace with the same fervor. Among other measures, such as treating with their delegations and providing relief during a season of drought, he distributed gifts to them and other allied tribes. Each spring when the caravans came up the Camino Real from Chihuahua to Santa Fe, the Indians would receive such items as brightly colored cloth, hats, shoes and other articles of clothing, bars of soap, mirrors, strings of beads, coral, cigarettes, and *piloncillos* (hard cones of raw sugar). Indeed the money spent on keeping the peace proved more profitable than previous war efforts (Kessell 1990:408).

Following the establishment of peace with the Comanches, a period of prosperity and growth followed in which New Mexico's barter system blossomed into a cash economy. The frequency and numbers of trade fairs increased, as witnessed by Governor Fernando de la Concha in 1787. Three months after taking office he wrote that in the short time since his arrival, seven fairs had been held at the pueblo of Taos, a "very considerable one" at Pecos, and another at Picurís.

This increase in trade warranted the establishment of a second annual caravan to Chihuahua that same year. Concha estimated that trade goods amounting to 30,000 pesos in livestock, fruit, and cotton and woolen textiles were sent south. A decade later, sheep and wool had become important trade items. Franciscan reports indicate that by the end of the eighteenth century, 15,000 to 20,000, sometimes up to 25,000 animals were exported to Chihuahua. *Churro* sheep, raised in New Mexico, yielded three times the amount of wool than did those from other areas of New Spain. The demand for them and their wool grew so much that in August of 1800 an unscheduled caravan was sent south, delivering over 200 cattle and nearly 19,000 churros along with pelts and wool.

While former trade items such as hides and piñon nuts from the traditional Plains Indian fairs still appeared on manifests, lists at the turn of the century show the addition of domestic livestock, like oxen and sheep, and woolen textiles. The biggest difference at the turn of the century was in the variety of cloth goods which were woven by the vecinos, such as cotton and wool blankets, *colchas* (embroidered cloth), *sayales* (sackcloth), and *medias* (woolen stockings). The *colchas*, known for their beautiful color and variety in design, were in high demand and were considered to be better than those made in the southern towns of New Spain (see Figure 1.2).

The peace with the Plains Indians, population growth among the vecinos, and the increase in exports brought prosperity to New Mexico. This wealth and the renewal of export items attracted the attention of new trade partners, the *Americanos*.

END OF THE SPANISH COLONIAL PERIOD: 1800–1821

The Spanish government felt the same alarm at discovering Americans in Louisiana Territory as they had with the French nearly a century earlier. The reports of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and of Americans making alliances with the Plains Indians, raised the alarm to a state of panic: the Spanish again feared losing control of their trade monopoly in New Mexico.

Bandos against foreign trade were still in effect in the early 1800s. Thus when Spanish soldiers discovered Lt. Zebulon Montgomery Pike and members of his expedition in the Red River area in the spring of 1807, they arrested and bundled them off to Santa Fe for questioning. New Mexican officials, dissatisfied with Pike's explanations regarding his expedition, sent him to Chihuahua for further interrogation. Pike was eventually released unharmed in Natchitoches, in American territory. However, the Spanish, still protective of their territory and not wishing to have information leaked about daily life in the provinces, kept the American lieutenant's expeditionary maps and notes.

This precautionary measure failed. Pike reassembled details of the expedition from memory and published his report in 1810. Not only did Americans have a first-hand account of life in the provinces of New Spain, they also saw economic opportunity created by the high prices of goods from the south compared with the depressed value of items from New Mexico. In the ensuing years, several American traders ventured to northern New Mexico, only to suffer the same fate as Frenchmen of the previous century: Spanish officials imprisoned and confiscated goods of the Americans they caught.²

With Mexican Independence in 1821, the tide changed: New Mexican officials welcomed Americans as trade partners. Two months after swearing allegiance to Mexico, Santa Fe Governor Fecundo Melgares received the first American group, Missourian William Becknell and the small group of merchants who accompanied him. The governor not only granted the Americans permission

to trade, he encouraged commerce with them. That fall three parties of Americans took part in the trade fair in Santa Fe. Becknell returned to St. Louis with reports of profitable trade in Santa Fe, and from then on, wagon caravans came from the American interior to trade there.

The year 1821 was a watershed: synonymous with Mexican Independence was the opening of the Santa Fe Trail. The Americans who ventured to the New Mexican capital from Missouri were welcomed by the *vecinos* for two reasons: they brought items to northern New Mexico that had been previously unavailable, and they undercut the merchants in Chihuahua by as much as two-thirds. Josiah Gregg, author of *Commerce of the Prairies*, recommended that the American merchants bring with them a “Santa Fé assortment” of domestic cottons and fine European fabrics including muslin, broadcloth, flannels, linen, calico, taffeta, velveteen, cashmere, alpaca, and silk. There were also all sorts of clothing items, such as jewelry—rings, necklaces, bracelets, crucifixes; beads, buttons, buckles, hairpins, razors and razor strops, and cologne; curtain hooks, wallpaper, and window glass; coffee mills, dishes, corks and bottles; wrapping and writing paper, pen points, slates and books; matches, percussion caps and traps; claret, sherry, and champagne. This listing of goods details items that were still being traded in the American interior into the early 1900s.³

At the time of Mexican Independence and the opening of the Santa Fe Trail in 1821, other historical forces at work had the same impact as the Spanish *entrada*, particularly with regard to trade in northern New Mexico. Even with the great temporal depth of its trade fairs, and the longest-standing history of good relationships with the Plains Indians of any of the northern pueblos, Taos could not withstand the currents of change.

Coincident with the rapid increase in *vecino* population at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a decrease in native populations resulting from disease and loss of land, particularly the Plains groups. The Indians found it increasingly difficult to produce trade goods which could compete with the great variety of manufactured products suddenly available through the Santa Fe Trail. Their traditional role as middlemen in the established trade systems was severely curtailed.

The marked growth of the *vecino* villages in the early 1800s resulted in the establishment of numerous small trade operations and the sudden rise of a mercantile class within the scattered communities of New Mexico. Around 1810, don Severino Martinez opened the first trading post in Taos. Built shortly after 1804, the Hacienda de los Martinez was an immense fortified home with substantial storage facilities, which provided the opportunity for year-round trade.

Martinez or his agents imported manufactured goods shipped in annual caravans from Chihuahua via the Camino Real. These he traded for hides, tallow, and other Plains products from the Indians and *comancheros* (or independent traders), and for woolen goods and grains from the local *vecinos* and Pueblo Indians.⁴ As his trade profits grew, Martinez reinvested in land, livestock, and more trade goods. He quickly realized the importance of the American trade and became an active participant in the developing commerce. By the time the Santa Fe Trail opened, Severino Martinez was



Fig. 6.3
Leather coat. Photo Margery Denton.
Fred Harvey Collection, Museum of
International Folk Art, Santa Fe.

the wealthiest man in Taos and a powerful political figure in the province of New Mexico. By providing a year-round market for all manner of goods, he exemplified the new style of “trader” who would supersede the traditional trade fairs.

CONCLUSION

By the end of the Spanish colonial period in 1821, fairs at Taos and other trade sites were already in decline. The traditional trade partnerships with the Plains Indians were breaking up. In 1805 the Comanches left New Mexico for the Canadian River area of Texas. They abandoned the Taos trade fair, taking their substantial business with them. The Indian fund, which had contributed to friendly trade with the allied tribes, was nearly exhausted by the end of the Spanish colonial period. Without gifts, the allied tribes were no longer attracted to New Mexico and sought trade opportunities elsewhere. The Comancheros and other traders were free to barter on the plains because of peace with the Indians. They and other traders vied with each other and the Plains people for trade goods.

With the opening of the Santa Fe Trail, trade caravans from St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and other American cities stopped in Santa Fe and Albuquerque en route to Mexico via the Camino Real, known by the Americans as the “Chihuahua Trail.” By the 1830s Santa Fe conducted regular trade fairs in July, commencing with the appearance of the first American wagon trains. Santa Fe eventually replaced Taos, Picurís, and Pecos as a major center of trade.

While the form of the traditional Taos trade fair changed after 1821, the relationships and trade patterns between the people remained intact in the Taos Valley. Up until World War II (and in rare cases even today), modern vecinos and the Pueblo people still traded goods for services. The Feast Day of San Geronimo, celebrated every September 30, is a direct descendant of the Taos trade fair. In the 1600s Franciscan influence connected a preexisting Pueblo harvest festival to a Catholic saint and feast day. The San Geronimo Fiesta still captures some of the character and excitement of the old Taos trade fairs when Native Americans from all over the West come to participate in the celebration. Today’s vecinos and other Americans as well as visitors from other continents come to witness the festivities, and buy native goods. Thus all the cultures continue to share in this thousand-year-old tradition. ♣

NOTES

1. While the Pueblo and Plains people had a long history of interaction, the cultural influences were considerably short of acculturation.
2. Those Americans who traded in Taos fared better because Taos was far enough removed from the capital, Santa Fe, that they often escaped detection.
3. Although northern New Mexico benefited greatly from the Santa Fe Trail, only a small portion of the goods brought into the province could be absorbed there. The vast bulk of the materials continued on down the Camino Real to be sold and bartered in Chihuahua or even Mexico City.
4. With the end of the hostilities with the Comanches, two trading groups became established which collectively were known as the Comancheros. The two groups, composed of Spanish traders and Pueblo traders, essentially served as middlemen between the New Mexican trading interests and the Plains tribes. The Comancheros maintained active trade networks for nearly one hundred years, finally being put out of business around the time of the Civil War.

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Captives and Slaves on the Camino Real

David M. Brugge



THE CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO lay over or close to preexisting Indian trails that had been in use for centuries, even millennia, before the arrival of wheeled vehicles in the New World. We do not know all the goods that were transported by the foot traffic of prehistory, and cannot say for certain that slaves trod these aboriginal trails. We do know that there was warfare in those ancient times, and captives were taken by the warriors. Early Spanish expeditions obtained captives from other tribes being held by Pueblo Indians at both Pecos and Hopi. It is possible that Pueblo willingness to provide these captives was a response to finding a market for them. It has also been hypothesized, however, that slaves were traded from the Southwest in prehistoric times (DiPeso 1979:160; Riley 1993:16).

At least some of the Spanish exploring parties that penetrated the Southwest included slaves among their personnel, and some also carried off local Indian captives into slavery when they returned south. The first expedition, that of Fray Marcos de Niza, included only one other person from the Old World, an African slave named Estebanico who was killed by the Zunis. Coronado's army included slaves, and Indian captives were taken in the Southwest. These last were, for the most part, freed when the army began its return in order to appease the natives, among whom a few missionaries remained. Both the Rodríguez-Chamuscado and the Espejo expeditions of the early 1580s included some Indian servants, but the status of these followers is not clear in the documents. Espejo's men, however, did return to Mexico with some captives from the Southwest. Information on the illegal entradas of the 1590s is sparse but use of Indian servants is almost certain. At least one such servant survived the destruction of the Leyva and Humaña party (Brugge 1993:95–96; Hammond and Rey 1966:8, 18, 201–202, 323–325; Kessell 1979:26, 31).

While several of these exploratory expeditions traversed parts of what later became the Camino Real, the journey of Oñate's party of first settlers is commonly accepted as the establishment of a road under royal patronage connecting New Mexico and New Spain. The first slaves on this royal road were brought to New Mexico by the followers of Oñate and perhaps by Oñate himself. Most of the Spanish colonists did not list their servants in the muster roles of the expedition, and those who did only occasionally specified whether they were slave or free. At least four black slaves were identified

in the Ulloa inspection, and according to Bandelier there were also both male and female Chichimec Indian slaves (Hammond and Rey 1953:247; Zavala 1968:212, 324, n. 392).

The first captives transported south along the Camino Real were also sent during Oñate's administration. They were sixty to seventy girls under the age of twelve taken in the defeat of Acoma Pueblo. They were apportioned out to various convents in Mexico. It was reported in 1612 that they had all become nuns and remained at their respective convents. Some of these girls were probably orphans, their parents killed in the battle at Acoma. Others were perhaps the daughters of adult captives sentenced to twenty years of servitude in New Mexico. Whether their fate can be labeled slavery might be debated, but they were the predecessors of other captive travelers about whom there can be no question (Hammond and Rey 1953:477; Minge 1976:15; Simmons 1991a:145; Zavala 1968:321).

Just when the sale of New Mexican captives in the mining towns to the south began is not known, but the need for labor in the mines had been a stimulus to the slave trade since the sixteenth century, when most tribes attacked by Spanish raiders were those south of the present international border. Mutual raiding and warfare between the free tribes of Apacheans and the Spanish settlers began even prior to the founding of Santa Fe, and captives were doubtless taken on both sides.

Specific mention of slaving is lacking until the term of office of Governor Juan de Eulate (1618–1625). Following his incumbency, he was accused of sending captive Indians to be sold as slaves in New Spain and sentenced to pay for their return to their own people. Despite Spanish laws declaring Indian enslavement illegal, there were exceptions and loopholes that allowed the taking of captives in war or after rebellion and reducing them to slavery quite openly, a practice that was not uncommon in the seventeenth century. Governors bought their appointments at costs that exceeded their salaries in expectation of profits accruing from their positions of power. Slaves were one of the few sources of profit in New Mexico and more valuable than most local products. Such slaves were often shipped south for sale or as gifts to influential people in Mexico (Brugge 1993:96; Zavala 1968:223, 326).

While Eulate's example may not have been the first for New Mexico, it was certainly not the last. His rather mild punishment, probably but a slight strain on his wealth as the slaves in the mines suffered a high death rate, did not deter others from doing as he had done.

One of his successors, probably Felipe de Sotelo Osorio (1625–1629), sponsored a raid by Pueblo Indians on the Plains Apaches in order to obtain captives to sell. He would probably never have been called to task for this rash act had not the raiders attacked the camp of a band then showing an interest in the missionaries' teachings, causing such a scandal that he felt constrained to reject the captives (Benavides 1954:55–56).

A man who was perhaps the most notorious of New Mexico's early governors, Luis de Rosas (1637–1641), sent out several expeditions intended primarily to bring back captives to sell in *la tierra de paz* or "peaceful land" in Mexico. Some of these expeditions relied on trade for the captives, as did one to the Long Hair Apaches and another to the Hopi country; another attacked friendly Apaches, killing a great many and taking captives for sale (Scholes 1937:145, n. 11).

Rosas escaped punishment for slaving in part at least because he was murdered, but the risk entailed in the slave trade was so slight that the next three governors in succession in the 1640s, Alonso Pacheco de Heredia, Fernando de Arguello, and Luis de Guzmán y Figaroa, were reported to have engaged in this activity, leading to further hostilities with neighboring tribes (Scholes 1937:189; Zavala 1968:325, n. 427).

Another governor, Bernardo López de Mendizábal (1659–1661), brought black slaves in his retinue when he came to Santa Fe. He also engaged in slaving while in New Mexico, sending out contingents of troops and Indians to take captives from the Apaches, both for his own use and to sell

to miners and ranchers in the south. He was reported to have dispatched some seventy Apaches for sale at Parral in 1659 and to have sent others in 1660 to Sonora where they were sold for 1200 pesos, suggesting about thirty to forty salves. When Mendizábal was arrested and himself sent south in chains by the Inquisition, his black and Indian slaves were impounded and also transported over the Camino Real (Scholes 1942:30–52).

Mendizábal's successor, Diego Dionisio de Peñalosa Briceño y Berdugo (1661–1664), was able to seize some of Mendizábal's property, including some slaves, when he assumed the governorship. He sent a number of these slaves to Mexico City as gifts to prominent people. As late as about 1679 or 1680 a band of friendly Apaches camped near Pecos was taken captive by Maese de Campo Francisco Javier, who gave some to his friends and sold the rest at Parral (Kessell 1979:231; Scholes 1942:140).

Punishments for slaving were not severe, but various governors, including Mendizábal and Peñalosa, ran afoul of the Inquisition and suffered devastating persecution for offenses against the church. Records for the years prior to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 are too incomplete to allow certainty as to the frequency with which captives were taken and held as slaves or the volume of traffic in them on the Camino Real. It is clear that some governors engaged in both activities and perhaps most or all of them did so. A governor who could avoid a fatal clash with the clergy and who could successfully bribe his successor during the review of his term in the *residencia* might escape any censure whatsoever. During the years of success of the Pueblo Revolt, most captives taken by the New Mexican Hispanics were Pueblo Indians. Their status as rebels against the king and as apostates from the church left them little protection under the law. Initial entradas from the exiled Spanish settlement at El Paso brought back Indians to be placed in the new southern missions established for them, perhaps because the sorting out of those who supported the rebels and those who could claim some residual loyalty to Spanish rule was still in flux. Later probes, however, returned with captives who clearly had lived in freedom in defiance of God and king. They were almost routinely judged to be legally enslaved. In 1687 ten Indians of Santa Ana Pueblo were carried off to El Paso where they were condemned to ten years of servitude and sold at mines in Nueva Vizcaya, the money being allocated to help finance the war in New Mexico. Their masters were required to care for them. Again in 1690, Pueblo captives were brought back to El Paso, some seventy over 14 years of age being sold into ten years of servitude with the provision that their names and ages be recorded so that they might be set free at the end of their sentence (Zavala 1968:233).

During the Reconquest, Governor Diego de Vargas took many captives who were sentenced to the usual ten years in the mines. Vargas, however, was lenient in revoking penalties when he could enlist as allies those who surrendered (Zavala 1968:235).

A most revealing document from 1714 is an order by Governor Juan Ignacio Flores Mogollón that Apache captives be baptized before being shipped out of New Mexico, the punishment for disobedience being loss of the captives and of the right to trade in them. His reasoning was that captives sometimes died en route, small children at times falling from horses or wagons and older captives being killed in raids, and that baptism was necessary for the salvation of their souls. He cited the example of the baptizing of black slaves when they arrived at port in Mexico prior to being sold, their new owners being obligated to instruct them in Christianity (Brugge 1985:xix–xx).

Mogollón himself engaged in the slave trade and knew the hazards of the road. He sold some captives in New Mexico and let others take the risk of losses on the Camino Real. In the same year he issued his order that slaves be baptized before they were taken south, he sold four Apache children to Alfonso Real de Aguilar, who intended to resell them in Sonora. Mogollón received 200 pesos for the four; thus prices in Sonora must have been considerably higher (Kessell 1979:361–363).

The Pre-Revolt customs had not been forgotten, nor had the desire of governors to profit from

their positions, but more devious methods seem to have been practiced to circumvent the legal obstacles. In 1715 Governor Felix Martínez appropriated some 350 Ute and Comanche captives and sent them with his brother to Parral for sale, announcing to the public that the proceeds were the royal fifth. During his residencia two years later it was revealed that he and his brother had kept the money for themselves. He was ordered to return the captives to New Mexico at his own expense. Many had died of smallpox, however, and it is doubtful that the penalty cost him very much (John 1981:242; Zavala 1968:250).

Later governors appear increasingly to have regarded their positions as civic duties rather than as private enterprise. Trade in captives became more the business of individual settlers, and it was not well documented. Captives did continue to be taken in wars with the free tribes and to be purchased from friendly tribes at trade fairs (Brugge 1985:frontispiece, 1993:97–99).

The baptismal records of New Mexico reveal a substantial, but fluctuating, number of captives baptized throughout the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth century, continuing even through the two and a half decades of Mexican rule and into the territorial period of United States sovereignty beyond the end of the Civil War. Tribal origins varied according to external relations, Navajos, Apaches, Comanches, and Utes/Paiutes being those most frequently named. The majority of those baptized probably became servants of local families by whom they were said to be “adopted.” Adoption was often no more than a legal fiction to disguise their true status, but their treatment varied among different families. Those who remained in New Mexico and their descendants entered the general population as a new socioeconomic class called *genízaro* (Brugge 1985:41–125; Horvath 1979).

Although the keeping of slaves became more generally distributed in New Mexico, not all of the captives were destined for service in the colony. One New Mexican, in his will in 1718, specified that “a little Indian girl” be delivered to Felipe Saíz of Parral to settle a debt. A dispute that became a legal case in 1748 revealed that a Ute woman escaped at La Salineta near El Paso while on her way to be sold at Parral. In 1761 Joseph Reaño paid for goods bought in Chihuahua with “little Indians.” In the same year, a slave who stole a horse in New Mexico was sentenced to 50 lashes and four years of servitude in northern Mexico (Gutiérrez 1991:152–153, 187; Zavala 1968:254).

A new policy was inaugurated in 1772, requiring that Indian captives be shipped to Mexico City for the viceroy to decide on their disposition. While women and children were to “be treated kindly in the care of the missionaries,” men were destined to become slaves of the state. The use of captives within New Mexican society had, by this time, become pervasive. Local customs involved their use as servants, beginning with involuntary servitude from which most, if they escaped that status at all, graduated to debt peonage or to a landless underclass relieved at times by the founding of *genízaro* settlements in those places most exposed to attacks by the free tribes. One *genízaro* settlement, Tomé, suffered 51 people killed in two Comanche attacks in 1777 and 1778. Many such settlements were short-lived, abandoned because of raids or fear of them. New Mexico was far enough from the centers of power that local custom could not be easily overcome. While the number of captives baptized did decrease, trade in captives continued to flourish inside the province, based largely it would appear on slaves purchased from the friendly tribes. The initial order seems to have left some loopholes. The rules regarding women and children were ambiguous at best, and it was realized that some captives had to be retained on the frontier as long as there was a possibility of exchanging them for Christians held by enemy tribes (Brugge 1993; John 1981:441–442, 478, 583; Zavala 1968:292).

One of the earliest shipments south from New Mexico as a result of the new policy was apparently that of 83 Comanches captured by Governor Pedro Fermín de Mendinueta in 1774. In 1779 the New Mexicans delivered 33 Apaches captured in battle by Governor Juan Bautista de Anza. They were sent only as far as El Paso, where they were to be exchanged for Hispanic captives. Most captives transported



Fig. 7.1
Indian captives separated by Mexican traders. Illustration R. Johnson.
From Navajo Stories of the Long Walk Period.
Courtesy Navajo Community College Press, Tsaile, Navajo Nation.

as far as Central Mexico seem to have been taken by campaigns originating in other provinces. In order to stimulate the surrender of captives to the central government, a bounty was authorized in 1780. One hundred pesos would be paid for each captive, head of a slain enemy, or the ears of an enemy. The most immediate result of this offer was an increase in the proportion of Indians killed in engagements, including more women and children dead. By 1782 an effort was being made to solicit contributions to a fund to ransom Christian captives (Brugge 1993:99; John 1981:603; Navarro García 1964:247; Zavala 1968:292–294).

The method of transport of captives is seldom mentioned in early documents, but the demand that they be sent south under government auspices required accounting for expenses and for the numbers of captives sent and received. By 1788 all captives, whether taken in war or purchased, were to be transported to New Spain. The adults were sent “in chains” or *en collera*, this last term suggesting restraint with collars, perhaps of leather, for the term *collera* applies to horse collars in modern usage. Iron collars and chains were in use, however, and there is mention of iron manacles, or *esposas*, for which a blacksmith received pay. The term *en cuerda* also appears in some accounts, suggesting that captives were sometimes bound with ropes. Escape was probably rare during the journey with such restraints in use, although there is one story of 51 Apache women who were locked overnight in a room at an inn. They managed to break out of this improvised prison at dawn, overpowered their guards, and gained their freedom (Lauber 1979:51; Simmons 1991b:52; Wright 1981:146; Zavala 1968:295, 301, 308, 347, n. 555).

Loss of prisoners during transport was apparently more frequently the result of death. One shipment of captives in 1788 from Sonora to Chihuahua and thence to the Valle de San Bartolomé had been reduced from 90 to 77 because of deaths between Sonora and Chihuahua. Another three failed to arrive at San Bartolomé, one a woman left gravely ill at a ranch, and two children who died. Another group sent from Ciudad Chihuahua to Mexico City began with 76 captives and arrived with only 61. A journey of 110 captives that traveled from San Luís Potosí to Mexico City resulted in the death of 28 people, of whom eight were women and six children (Zavala 1968:301, 386–388).

Captives from New Mexico continued to be shipped south in the late 1780s. In 1788, six were sent from Santa Fe to Chihuahua, five of whom had been taken in war and one purchased from the Comanches. There is a record of another six transported from Santa Fe in 1795. Again in 1804 two women and a girl were taken from Santa Fe to San Eleccario. Antonio Narbona was a lieutenant assigned to a presidio in Sonora when he led Spanish colonial and Opata Indian troops against the Navajos. Narbona’s successful 1804–1805 campaign resulted in the capture of several men, women, and children. At least sixteen were taken to San Eleccario, but were later repatriated to their people at the treaty negotiations. Several more were carried off to Sonora by Narbona’s troops, where they were baptized. Although baptisms of captives in New Mexico were at an ebb during much of this period; church records show that captives continued to be kept by local families (Brugge 1985:iii, 53–54; Brugge and Correll 1971:43–44; Calderón Quijado 1953:170; Zavala 1968:294, 298, 300).

In the south, the captives were put to work, some in construction on the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa at Veracruz and others on tobacco plantations. Escape from these labor assignments was not as difficult as from restraints imposed during travel. Escape of the convict labor at Veracruz was a longstanding problem and not limited to Indian captives, who doubtless quickly learned ways to flee. It was not long before fugitive Apaches were raising havoc in southern Mexico. This development led to a plan to ship the captives to Cuba where the obstacles to return to their own country would be greater. Even there they escaped and formed raiding parties in the mountains where they fought to the death rather than return to slavery (Simmons 1991b:51–54; Zavala 1968:301, 305–308).

Evidence of transport of captives over the Camino Real is lacking for the Mexican and territorial periods, although trade in captives continued, both by purchase from the free tribes and resale by traders of those taken in raids. It is quite likely that the northern section of the road still served as one route by which captives were transported locally, but sale outside of the New Mexican settlements probably diminished rapidly, especially after an international boundary separated New Mexico from modern Mexico. Following the Civil War, the federal government undertook serious efforts to end Indian slavery. By 1872 captives were being freed and returned to their own people. While many captives were so thoroughly alienated from their natal cultures that they remained a part of Hispanic society, they also enjoyed greater legal protection and it is doubtful that trade in human beings continued.

Lest the above account be viewed as any sort of indication that Spanish colonists engaged in more inhumane treatment of Indians than did others, it is necessary to call attention to the fact that both British and French settlers also enslaved Indians under conditions no better than those described for New Mexico (Lauber 1979: Wright 1981:126–150). ♣

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Governor Allende's Instructions for Conducting Caravans on the Camino Real, 1816

Robert J. Torrez



FOR MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES, the Camino Real was New Mexico's principal line of communication with the centers of government and commerce in Mexico, and subsequently with Spain. Everything the people of this northernmost Spanish province needed that they could not produce locally had to be transported over this vital link to the outside world.

This "royal road," as it is often called, had its beginnings as the route over which Franciscan missionaries supplied the numerous churches they established among New Mexico's Pueblos after the Spanish colony was founded in 1598. But the nature of these mission supply trains changed considerably by the end of the seventeenth century. After the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and subsequent *reconquista*, the New Mexican colony was reestablished, not as a government-subsidized mission for the Pueblos, but as a defensive outpost whose purpose was to protect this remote frontier against the North American incursions of Spain's myriad enemies. The caravans, along with the colony, became secularized and more commercially oriented.

From the inception of the New Mexican colony, Franciscan missionaries as well as businessmen, government officials, and colonists hungry for news from home must all have awaited eagerly for the caravans to arrive. And just as eagerly, they must have planned for their departure. Unfortunately, the extant documentation at the State Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe provides only limited information on how they were organized and conducted.

The Spanish Archives of New Mexico do contain a few documents which provide fragmentary details. But most of them, such as the November 20, 1794, notice issued by Governor Fernando Chacon, do little more than announce the departure of the caravan, or *cordón*, and its military escort from Santa Fe to the Villa of Chihuahua.¹

In another letter, dated February 21, 1797, Governor Chacon informs Pedro de Nava of a report he received from don Manuel Rengel, commander of the presidio at San Elseario. Don Manuel reported the caravan had been raided at the "Paraje de la Jornada del Muerto," on the southward leg of the journey. The letter does not provide details of the attack, but it does say Rengel planned to return with the caravan to the Puesto of Sabinal, where he asked Chacon to meet him with two hundred armed men so he could undertake a campaign into the "Sierra de San Matheo" to seek and

punish the attackers.²

The details of the proposed campaign are beyond the scope of this essay. What these scattered documents make clear, however, is that caravans were sent up and down the Camino Real on a regular basis, and that they were large, complicated, joint military and civilian undertakings which would have required extensive planning, organization, and quite naturally, regulation.

The bureaucratic and regulatory nature of Spanish government would imply the production of a great number of documents which describe in great detail the organization, nature, and conduct of these undertakings. Yet only one document in New Mexico's Spanish Archives deals entirely with this process, and it dates to 1816, relatively late in the history of this ancient road.

Despite the apparent completeness of this document, it provides only a general set of instructions which refer to, but do not specify, customary practices—practices which probably developed over the course of several generations, and were in common use by the early nineteenth century.

These instructions identify Sevilleta, which was known as La Joya de Sevilleta, as the principal gathering point for the caravans at this time. This settlement was located along the east bank of the Río Grande, north of present-day Socorro. The site was apparently settled several years before the Spanish government approved a land grant of that name in 1819.³

Because of the similarity of the name, Sevilleta has sometimes been confused with Cebolleta, the eighteenth-century settlement located west of Albuquerque. This was evidently a familiar problem nearly two hundred years ago, as noted in an 1804 letter from Nicolas Tarín to Governor Fernando Chacon. Writing from San Elseario, Tarín asked for clarification on whether Chacon had requested he await further orders at Sevilleta or Cebolleta. Tarín noted the orders handed to him specified Cebolleta, but this did not seem correct, so he proposed to wait for Chacon's response before taking any action.⁴

Other documents from the period identify Sevilleta as an important location along the road. Instructions written by Governor Jose Manrique on May 31, 1810, for his *teniente*, Ysidro Rey, specify the process by which the mail to and from Chihuahua was to be picked up and delivered that July. Manrique instructed Rey to choose a corporal in whom he had complete confidence, and send him with six soldiers to Sevilleta. There they were to meet fourteen *vecinos*, seven of whom were to be from Alameda and seven from Albuquerque, chosen by their respective *alcaldes*. The entire party would escort the mail pouch (*valija*) to the *Puesto de Fray Cristobal*, where they were to turn it over to a party that had traveled north to meet them. They were then to return to Santa Fe with the mail pouch they received in exchange.⁵

The following is the translated transcript of the instructions issued on November 20, 1816, to Jose Maria de Arze by New Mexico Governor Pedro Maria de Allende:⁶

Instructions which shall be observed by the Tnte. Don Jose Maria de Arze, in the departure, conduct and return of the caravan of *vecinos* and squad of troops which leaves to Chihuahua under his command.

- 1st. On the 22nd of the present, there shall leave from this capital, the appointed escort of one Corporal (*Cavo*), one carbiner (*caravintero*), and eighteen soldiers, together with one sick soldier en route to the military hospital of Chihuahua to seek medical care, and march in regular formation to the settlement of Cevilleta.
2. At said settlement, he shall gather all the *vecinos* that desire to leave to the Provinces of Nueva Viscaya and Sonora to conduct their commerce, and will take care that the inhabitants of Sevilleta are not injured in any way; arrangements must be made to care for the horses, equally by the troops as well as the *vecinos*, making sure it is done with

*Instrucción que debe. observar el Genl. D. José Allende
de Hérc. Comand. de del. Crisón de Yéimora y partida de
Tropa que sale para Chihuahua en su ida, estado y regreso.*

10 El día 22 del prev. saldrá de esta Capital con
la escolta nombrada de un Capto, un Caraván.
y diez y ocho soldados, incorporándose a ella
un soldado enfermo que para el Hospital At-
tizar de Chihuahua a curarse y marchará a for-
mada Regular, hacia el Puerto de Cuatrecasas

2 En dicho Puerto se le reunirá todos los Ve-
cinos que quieran salir con sus Comarcas alas
Provincias de Ch. Y. y Sonora, y en el cuidado

Fig. 8.1
First page from Gov. Allende's caravan
instructions. New Mexico State Records
Center and Archives, SANM II:#2681.

instrucción que se da

San José 20 de Noviembre de 1816

Lecho J. Allende

Mandado

Fig. 8.2
Gov. Allende's signature and
date on instruction document.
New Mexico State Records Center
and Archives, SANM II:#2681.

the most exacting care to prevent any surprise by enemies; and once everything has been made ready, an inventory shall be taken of all its contents, flocks, livestock, weapons for defense, equipment, and horse herds that each person is taking, taking care that no breeding stock or yearling rams are exported, recording everything in a manner that includes all that has been done, and directing same to the commanding officer in the first available mail after you have arrived in Chihuahua, and another to this Government. Care shall be taken that all who go along have arms, whether they be firearms or any other kind, for defense of their proper persons and property, turning back those that do not have any, and making sure that in addition to the servants, the herders and wranglers are also armed.

3. You shall not permit that the *vecinos* mount (use) horses belonging to the troops nor that the troops rent or load their saddle mules, separating the animals with company brands as well as those belonging to individuals of the escort; and there shall be an inspection at the said settlement [of Sevilleta] to account for the horses each one takes for said duty.
4. When the preliminary preparations have been concluded at Cevilleta, the march shall proceed in customary formation and with all possible vigilance to the task with which you have been assigned; be advised that whenever any sign of an enemy is observed, all the troops, as well as the *vecinos*, should hobble their horses at night in case of trouble.
5. Although it is known the Apaches Faraones and Mescaleros are at peace, you shall not permit any individual to proceed ahead while the caravan is still a considerable distance from the Pueblo of Paso; and this may be allowed only in the final stages of the journey to the said Pueblo, and in case there is any sign of enemies, it shall not be permitted until approaching the vicinity of the bridge.
6. You shall remain in said Pueblo only the days deemed to be most appropriate for everyone to conduct their specific business. The horse herds shall be gathered and the guards shall place them in a secure place where they are not likely to be stampeded. At said settlement, those groups of *vecinos* who want to continue to the presidios shall proceed separately after being provided the necessary passports. For their security and safety, a report of these persons, like the one done at Sevilleta, shall be done and directed to the commanding general, who shall retain it for submission to this government upon his return.
7. Upon conclusion of this, being that the days on the trail need to be very precise, as noted in the preceding article, the journey to Chihuahua shall continue in proper formation. As is customary, the remaining *vecinos* shall take great care, as will the troops, not to harm the inhabitants of the pueblos through which they pass; and it shall not be permitted that any *vecinos* move ahead of the caravan as they approach Chihuahua, without your specific knowledge and notification of the military commander of Chihuahua.
8. After passing through el Paso or Carrizal, you shall leave all the animals belonging to the troops which are in poor condition, under the care of the commander of the presidio, along with a soldier of the escort. Care shall be taken that the soldier left behind for this purpose is on his best conduct.
9. At the villa of Chihuahua, you shall watch the behavior and actions of the troops, making sure they wear their uniforms in the best possible manner, and that they perform their duties with precision, warning them not to provide any excuse for complaint of any kind, especially pertaining to debts and transactions involving jewelry from dowries, and that you will rigorously punish any insubordination.
10. When the business you have been authorized to do in Chihuahua is completed and everyone has made preparations, you shall inform the military commander of said villa that you are prepared to embark on the return, which shall be recorded in the report; and with the proper order required, depart, reporting the same to the commanding general by the weekly mail from said villa.
11. In all else that occurs, you shall observe these regulations to the best of your understanding and as you see them before you, and according to the responsibilities which are implied.



Fig. 8.3
Calle de Guadalupe,
Ciudad Chihuahua,
c. 1883–86. W.H.
Jackson. Courtesy
Museum of New
Mexico, neg
#54088.

Governor Allende's instructions help clarify several aspects of how caravans along the Camino Real were conducted. The instructions clearly express an official concern for the caravan's security, and the steps which don Jose Maria de Arze was to take to protect the vulnerable livestock, which was the principal target of Indian raids. There is also a persistent emphasis on the need to avert, or at least minimize, damage to private property along the route. Other instructions show an official concern with behavior of the military escort, and with improper use of government property by these soldiers, who were apparently willing to supplement their meager wages by renting their mules or taking along trade items.

Of particular interest and importance to those anxious to learn more about these caravans, however, is the recurring mention of required inventories and reports. Such documents, if they were in fact prepared and directed to the appropriate officials, would contain varying degrees of information which would be valuable in helping us understand the process by which the caravans were organized, managed, and utilized. The inventories and reports alluded to in instructions two, six, and ten would tell us the numbers and composition of the livestock, as well as the volume and type of trade goods taken to Chihuahua.

These documents might also identify the modes of transportation used to convey these goods, and clarify our popular image of the noisy wooden *carretas* supposed to have been utilized to transport freight along the road. The names of the *vecinos* and the nature of the goods each carried would also provide valuable insight into the economic and social role played by the Camino Real.

The fact that these reports are not in the Spanish Archives of New Mexico does not mean extant copies are not in Mexican or Spanish sources not yet utilized or recognized. Much needs to be done to identify these documents so we can improve our knowledge of the trade conducted along this important road. The international nature of this commerce and its implications for research provide an exciting avenue which cannot be ignored by those interested in helping expand our understanding of the Camino Real. ♣

NOTES

1. Microfilm edition of the Spanish Archives of New Mexico, 1621–1821 (SANM II), New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, roll 13, Twitchell #1299.
2. SANM II, roll 14, Twitchell #1375c.
3. Surveyor General Report No. 95, Sevilleta Grant. Microfilm Edition of the Land Records of New Mexico: Spanish Archives of New Mexico, Series I, Surveyor General Records, and Records of the Court of Private Land Claims, roll 22.
4. SANM II, roll 15, Twitchell #1758.
5. SANM II, roll 17, Twitchell #2323.
6. SANM II, roll 18, Twitchell #2681. Note that Allende spelled Sevilleta with both a C and an S.



Fig. 8.4
Mexican Teamsters.
From On A Mexican Mustang,
Sweet and Knox.
Courtesy Denver Public Library,
Western History Division.

New Mexican Spanish Colonial Furniture and the Camino Real

Keith Bakker



THE POPULARITY OF THE SANTA FE STYLE has encouraged numerous misconceptions about the quality and character of Hispanic New Mexican furniture. Misinterpretations can be traced back at least to the turn of the century when newly arrived Anglo collectors sought to appreciate, interpret, and purchase New Mexico's Hispanic material culture. In the nineteenth century the first Anglo-written histories of New Mexico promoted a romantic myth of isolation and regression which still influences scholarly inquiry. Although most scholars no longer believe that isolation caused a regression to medieval styles in New Mexican decorative arts, this opinion still influences modern perceptions of New Mexican material culture, often subtly coloring research. As a consequence, most people expect eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Hispanic New Mexican furniture to be crudely constructed, often weathered, usually unpainted, and definitely unsophisticated.

Twentieth-century authors have tended to minimize the skills and training of New Mexican woodworkers and, by extension, the sophistication of their secular and religious patrons.¹ The Anglo romanticization of Hispanic New Mexican "peasant" culture has left most modern readers with the impression that early New Mexicans were satisfied with a generally inferior wooden product which was roughly constructed using a limited selection of medieval tools. Some historians still believe that New Mexican Spanish colonial furniture was not originally varnished or painted, thus further encouraging modern expectations about the rough quality and appearance of New Mexican wooden artifacts, the character of Hispanic New Mexican material culture, and cultural attitudes of a physically isolated colonial population.

New Mexicans of lower social status and income surely had fewer choices than their wealthier neighbors, but early New Mexicans of means preferred furniture and decorative objects that were carefully crafted and often painted, and they obtained such objects both locally and via the Camino Real. The Camino Real was the route by which settlers and woodworkers trained in a European tradition brought European tools, technology, and design sensibilities to the province of New Mexico. The Franciscan friars and the governing class also brought many finely crafted wooden objects which had been fabricated in the cities of New Spain, and these objects were a significant expression of New Mexico's Spanish colonial culture.

Until recently, however, most studies of New Mexican furniture have focused on only those artifacts fabricated within the present boundaries of New Mexico while ignoring the portion of its material culture that came from other parts of New Spain (cf. Pierce 1989). The significance of wooden objects fabricated by skilled craftsmen in other parts of New Spain has been minimized in favor of collecting and studying simpler, functional wooden objects which had suffered a long history of hard use and neglect. Studies of artifacts produced in New Mexico without reference to Spanish colonial artifacts from Mexico and beyond thus helped substantiate a romantic and often condescending view of New Mexican society as quaint and backwards.

Evidence contained in shipping records, wills, and inventories suggests that New Mexican patrons of means may have relied on local woodworkers to produce functional wooden objects while preferring to purchase more sophisticated furnishings from guild-trained and regulated woodworkers (*carpinteros*) working in the major craft centers of New Spain. Since these expensive furnishings were used in conjunction with locally manufactured wooden objects and architectural elements, both types of objects must be studied and compared to appreciate Hispanic New Mexican material culture and the Spanish colonial society which produced and used it. A brief review of documents, wooden products, and artists' materials associated with trade on the Camino Real provides an opportunity for such consideration.

This paper reviews Spanish colonial documents listing woodworking tools and describes the effects of tool marks on modern perceptions of New Mexican Spanish colonial furniture. Further evidence is presented to support the role of Mexican woodworking guilds in the transfer of European technology and design sensibilities to New Mexico via the Camino Real. This evidence includes information from recent case studies of New Mexican furniture, and analysis of painted finishes. The cultural role of furniture fabricated in Mexico is also discussed.

TOOLS

The earliest documents pertaining to the New Mexican portion of the Camino Real are those translated by George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey in *Don Juan de Oñate: Colonizer of New Mexico, 1598–1628*. Before Oñate and his soldier-colonists left Santa Bárbara, the viceroy ordered his agent, don Lope de Ulloa y Lomos, to inspect Oñate's supplies and the provisions of his prospective settlers to ensure that they met the terms of Oñate's contract with the king of Spain. As would be expected, the supplies included the numerous woodworking tools which would be essential to the daily functioning of a new colony on the northern frontier of New Spain.

The Ulloa inventory lists the first documented European woodworking tools to be brought to New Mexico. Under "Iron goods," valued by both weight and type of tool, Ulloa listed "wedges," "adzes with handles" (including shipbuilder's adzes), "axes with round holes," "augers of all sizes," "chisels of all types," "small saws," and "saws from 4 to 6 spans long" (probably a handspan). Under "Small articles" are included "two small dividing compasses" and "two planes, one with wooden base, the other iron." Under "Barter goods," Ulloa listed "iron hatchets, without handle hole or steel." This last entry suggests that barter goods were of an inferior quality while tools intended for use by the settlers were made of steel, an essential element for forming and holding a sharp cutting edge. The inventory also includes "two arrobas and five pounds of steel," presumably to fashion or repair additional tools or weapons (Hammond and Rey 1953:107, 133).

In addition to the tools supplied by Oñate, at least fourteen individual settlers itemized woodworking tools in their personal inventories. The number of settlers who brought woodworking tools to New Mexico is probably larger, as some individuals' lists include entries such as "set of tools" without specifying purpose. One settler specifically described himself as a *carpintero*. Francisco

Hernández Cordero brought with him “a complete set of tools for my trade as carpenter and for making stocks for harquebuses” (Hammond and Rey 1953:233).

The selection of woodworking tools listed in these early inventories is not extensive, and probably reflects the priorities of constructing buildings and functional wooden objects to establish an economically viable colony on the frontier. The tools listed are those necessary for building doors, windows, wooden boats, mills, and machinery needed to smelt and assay silver.

The functions of most of the tools listed in Oñate’s inventories are commonly understood today. However, the inclusion of at least four separate entries listing iron wedges with other woodworking tools requires some explanation. Modern historians have assumed that the early settlers felled pine trees with axes, sawed boards with two-man pit saws, and smoothed those boards with adzes.² This would have been a tedious and inefficient process, and its widespread practice is not substantiated by existing documents, tools, or tool marks. It is possible that early New Mexican woodworkers often used riven (split from the log) rather than sawn boards to construct wooden objects. The backs of numerous retablos and the interior and rear surfaces of many pieces of furniture exhibit the particular type of wood grain tear-out characteristic of riven boards.

A few of the saws listed in the inventories may have been long enough to saw boards from logs, but the descriptions are vague and none are specifically described as pit saws. (Pit saws are two-man saws designed for rip-cutting boards from logs. They have handles at each end, mounted perpendicular to the blade of the saw. On saws used to fell trees, the handles are mounted parallel to the saw blade.)³ Thus far only one pit saw has been found in New Mexico, and it may have been manufactured in the eastern United States; it probably reached New Mexico during the nineteenth century through trade on the Santa Fe Trail.⁴ To date, no Hispanic pit saws have been found in New Mexico. As for the longer saws listed in the early inventories, it is not clear whether they were intended for cutting boards or felling trees.

Tool marks on numerous New Mexican wooden artifacts indicate that the boards were split from logs. Woodworkers have historically used adzes to size pieces of riven wood quickly and roughly to final dimension, especially to square up posts and beams from logs. Adzes are not usually employed to smooth sawn boards—smoothing planes are. Even today, in some provincial areas of northern Mexico, local woodworkers still use iron wedges to split boards from pine logs. The practice was also observed in New Mexico as recently as twenty-five years ago at Picuris Pueblo. At that time, Pueblo woodworkers used both iron and wooden wedges to split boards from clear-grained ponderosa pine logs at least ten feet long.⁵ In Mexico and New Mexico, many of the local species of white and yellow pine are well suited to such a process, as they have a tendency to split cleanly along the grain of the wood.⁶ Splitting out boards from the log requires a certain skill but is far less labor intensive than rip-sawing them by hand.

The numerous iron wedges listed in the Ulloa inventory were probably included for the purpose of splitting the boards which would have been essential to establish the new Spanish colony in northern New Mexico. This practice may have continued well into the nineteenth century, even after sawmills were established in New Mexico. In 1827, for example, the last will and testament of Severino Martinez included six iron wedges (*calsas de acero*) (Minge 1963:45). It is commonly believed that sawmill technology was unavailable in New Mexico until the U.S. Army arrived in 1846. However, accounts of the Taos rebellion indicate that Simeon Turley operated a sawmill in Arroyo Hondo before that time. The U.S. Army did build a water-powered sawmill with a circular blade on the Santa Fe River in 1846 to cut boards to build Fort Marcy,⁷ but records suggest that the fort may have been completed before the sawmill was operational.⁸ Mule-driven mills with circular blades were used at Rayado and Fort Union by 1852 (Oliva 1993:68–69).⁹

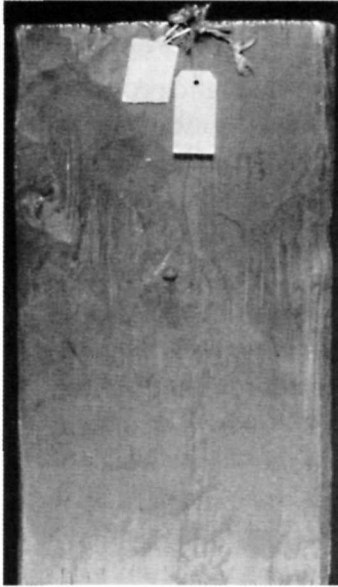


Fig. 9.1

Back of a retablo showing riving and adze marks. Courtesy National Museum of American History. (photo by author)

Understanding the nature of the wood-splitting process may refine our appreciation of the character of many pieces of New Mexican furniture. Splitting pine logs with wedges would produce boards of slightly varying thickness, as the splits would follow any irregularities in the wood grain. Such boards could then be efficiently worked to their final dimensions using adzes, but they are not as straight or as uniform in thickness as sawn boards. Numerous pieces of New Mexican furniture were built with boards of slightly irregular dimensions and surface variations which are characteristic of riven boards. These irregularities follow the grain of the wood, whereas irregularities produced by an adze or saw would not, unless the woodworker was so inept as to gouge out large chunks of wood with his tool.

Only some back and interior surfaces of New Mexican Spanish colonial furniture retain adze marks. Prominent exterior surfaces do not. The back surfaces of countless New Mexican retablos show both riving marks along the grain of the wood (from splitting) and adze marks which do not follow the wood grain (Figure 9.1). The fronts, of course, have almost invariably been smoothed with planes, as were boards in almost every other part of the world at that time. Very few retablos were painted on adzed surfaces which were not first planed smooth. One notable exception is the retablo of San Raphael attributed to Bernardo Miera y Pacheco, an individual whose woodworking skills were not of the highest quality.

If boards in colonial New Mexico were split rather than sawn from the log, then the now-famous “hand adzed” surfaces of New Mexican furniture, retablos, and altar screens do not represent a crude attempt by unsophisticated Hispanic woodworkers to produce smooth boards using medieval tools. Rather, they are the result of a skilled and efficient preparation process, and adze marks were left only on the backs of retablos and the interior and bottom surfaces of furniture where they would not be seen. It is not until after the appearance of Anglo-inspired Spanish Colonial Revival furniture early in the twentieth century that adze marks are found on prominent surfaces of New Mexican wooden artifacts. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries even the church vigas, installed 30 feet or more above floor level, may have been planed before they were carved. In his book on the early Salinas mission churches Ivey translates a list of tools from the contract of 1631, which includes “1 box plane for planing board and beam surfaces flat” (1988:39).

Many revival pieces, whether Anglo or Hispanic, display genuine adze marks, and ersatz adze marks made with gouges, as a key design element, but these tool marks have nothing to do with the wood preparation process. This particular stylistic detail is especially common as a background for low-relief carved designs, as well as on chest lids and *trastero* (cupboard) doors, but the practice reflects another Anglo romanticization of Hispanic New Mexican culture.¹⁰ Spanish colonial New Mexican furniture, particularly the carved chests, rarely shows adze marks on prominent surfaces, except where the carving was added by twentieth-century antique dealers in an attempt to increase the monetary value of uncarved chests. On one small chest in the collection at the Museum of International Folk Art, two carved rosettes have been added to the back. The carved designs on a larger early chest, now privately owned, appear to have been copied from the twentieth-century design book produced for the WPA. Although the chest itself is clearly old, the carving is not. And not surprisingly, the background areas exhibit the ersatz adze marks commonly found on Spanish Colonial Revival furniture from the WPA era.

Surfaces and tool marks on authentic carved New Mexican chests show that early New Mexican

woodworkers competently used planes and chisels to flatten and smooth boards and the backgrounds for low-relief carvings just as woodworkers did in Europe and other areas of the New World, including New England. Woodworking planes may not have been in plentiful supply in New Mexico, but they were available. Planes are listed in numerous early seventeenth century Camino Real documents in addition to the Oñate inventories. In a 1631 document titled “Statement of Ornaments and other things for Divine Worship to be given each Friar-Priest the first time he goes to those Conversions” the woodworking tools listed include a plane (*cepillo con su casa*) for each friar, as well as axes, adzes, a medium-sized saw, a chisel, and two augers. Another document titled “Supplies for Benavides and Companions going to New Mexico, 1624–26” includes “Six carpenter’s planes at 26 *reales* each” (Scholes 1930:103; Hodge et al. 1945:118; Ivey 1988:39). Since this figure represents a rather high price for the period, planed surfaces must have been of some importance to New Mexican consumers.

Perhaps early New Mexican furniture is popularly thought of as crudely constructed because so many people still think New Mexican woodworkers did not own or use planes. The term “hand adzed” has become so popular in modern New Mexican histories that it is now indiscriminately applied to any slightly uneven surface, regardless of the actual tool marks present. Even mortise and tenon joints on an eighteenth-century altar screen have been described as “hand adzed.” This, of course, is highly unlikely, as it would be impossible to cut a mortise with an adze, and it would not be the tool of choice for shaping a tenon. New Mexican woodworkers most likely cut their mortises with chisels and mallets and their tenons with saws and chisels or planes, just as woodworkers everywhere did before the advent of power tools. Examples of this work can be seen in the charred beam fragments from the mission church at Abó (now in the Laboratory of Anthropology collections). Mortises are neatly laid out with scribed layout lines and are neatly cut. One woodworker even laid out his mortise in the wrong location but adjusted to the correct location before cutting, leaving the original lines visible.

GUILDS

Extant documents do not indicate that woodworking guilds were ever formally established in New Mexico, but their absence may simply have been due to the nature of market forces and demand for skilled services. New Mexico’s colonial population and disposable income were probably too small to support the number of woodworkers necessary to establish a formal guild system. Also, upon attaining guild certification as masters, the most skilled craftsmen would probably not have chosen to move to the northern frontier of New Spain when the wealth in Central Mexico provided a more ready market for their skills. The material evidence, however, clearly indicates that New Mexican carpinteros worked within the same Spanish tradition that was well established in the cities of New Spain. The work of New Mexican carpinteros may not have matched the technical quality of their urban counterparts, but New Mexican woodworkers and their clients were certainly not unaware of urban tastes and craft standards. The documentary record and the details of many pieces of New Mexican furniture support the opinion that guild standards influenced the construction of furniture in New Mexico (Taylor and Bokides 1987:6–15). For example, the chests with six carved panels on the front board fit the description of pieces apprentices had to make to attain guild certification (Figure 9.2).

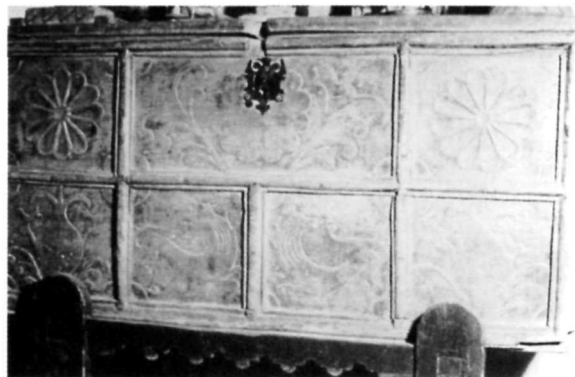


Fig. 9.2
Carved Spanish colonial chest with applied moldings.
(photo by author)

To understand the significance of guild training, an issue of translation must be clarified. The Spanish term *carpintero* is usually thought to mean carpenter, but this is somewhat misleading. Spanish guild regulations indicate that carpinteros were variously carpenters, joiners, mechanics, furniture makers, and musical instrument makers, depending upon the specific nature of their formal guild training (López de Arenas 1912; Cruz 1960). Certain woodworkers in New Spain received special training to build wooden machinery. Under the Spanish guild system established in Mexico City in 1568, the *carpinteros de lo prieto* learned to build “the wheels and screws for horse-powered mills; the presses for an oil mill; the spindle for a wine press; a pump; a water wheel; and various kinds of mining machinery” (Taylor and Bokides 1987:7–8). Different guild-regulated groups of carpinteros produced complex Mudéjar-style coffered ceilings and paneling, doors, windows, and furniture. Because the English word is generally understood to refer to house builders, the term does not do justice to the skills involved in becoming a guild-certified *carpintero los blancos* or *de lo prieto*. The word “joiner,” although uncommon today, provides a better translation for the Spanish term.

Spanish shipbuilding practices may also have influenced woodworking technique in New Mexico. Oñate’s inventory included shipbuilding tools, and in 1600 he specifically requested that the viceroy send “skilled carpenters in order to build ships,” still hoping his expedition might discover the elusive Straits of Anian (Northwest Passage) somewhere in northern New Mexico (Hammond and Rey 1953[2]:994–1000). It is not clear from the documentary evidence whether the viceroy ever granted Oñate’s request, but shipbuilders may have been the source of specific craft techniques. The splitting of boards from logs is a necessary skill for shipbuilding, as riven boards are preferable to sawn boards for constructing planks that would not crack when they are bent to fit the frame of the ship’s hull.

Some types of New Mexican furniture may have been fashioned by woodworkers originally trained to build wooden machinery. These carpinteros de lo prieto may have met a need in the new colony for furniture such as grain chests. Furniture constructed by such woodworkers would not exhibit the fineness of detail and sophisticated decoration taught to fine furniture makers, but that lack of refinement would not indicate a lack of formal training. It is possible that the lack of a guild system led to lower standards, but any craftsman trained to make fine furniture could certainly have passed on that skill to an apprentice whether or not a formal organization existed.

A large frame and panel chest from the collection of the Harwood Foundation Museum in Taos provides an excellent example of a piece of wooden furniture which may have been built by such woodworkers, probably in the eighteenth century. This chest is the one from which the Valdez attribution is derived. It belongs to a group of approximately 20 similar chests believed to have been



Fig. 9.3
Large Valdez chest with shortened legs.
Courtesy Harwood Museum of University
of New Mexico. (photo by author)

constructed by the Valdez family of Velarde, New Mexico (Figure 9.3). The legs of this New Mexican chest were originally at least 20 inches longer and were secured to the bottom rail by two wooden braces. The chest also originally had a small center drawer hung between the angled braces below the bottom rail. Museum records do not describe the condition of the chest when it was acquired around 1918, so it is unclear whether the legs were cut off by a twentieth-century dealer or while it was in use.

The frame members of this Valdez chest are smooth but of slightly uneven dimensions and not quite square. The raised panels on the back of the chest show surface variations typical of riven boards. The front panels and

the chest top board and lid are of more even dimensions, indicating that the riven surfaces were planed smooth. Adze marks are prominent only on interior surfaces, especially the bottom board (Figure 9.4).

This type of chest, commonly called a *granero* or an *harinero*, was designed to store grain or flour, hence the long legs to keep the contents safe from vermin. The interior joints of this chest were caulked with scraps of cloth, sawdust, and adhesive to prevent loss of the grain or flour. Wills and inventories indicate that such chests were used in storerooms, rather than within the formal living space. Therefore, graneros must be understood as functional rather than decorative pieces of furniture. Nevertheless, besides being sturdily built, this granero is well proportioned, competently constructed, and simply decorated, creating an attractive piece of furniture. It does not appear to have been constructed by someone lacking craft training.

The construction of the Valdez chests suggests fabrication by skilled woodworkers whose training did not include commonly accepted design principles and construction details passed on through the Spanish furniture-making guilds. Similar frame and panel chests with shorter legs were popular in the northern Spanish provinces of Asturias and Navarra, and the Spanish chests are built with the same type of mortise and tenon joinery. Some medieval chests from southern France also employ this joinery. This evidence suggests that the maker may have immigrated to New Mexico from that area or brought with him a design tradition which can be traced back to those provinces (Pierce 1989:183).

Construction details of some New Mexican furniture offer evidence that guild-trained furniture makers worked in the province during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In comparison to frame and panel chests, carved and dovetailed six-board New Mexican chests are usually more finely executed. For instance, the carved chest often attributed to Nicholas de Apodaca was certainly constructed by a craftsman who had been trained to build furniture (Figure 9.5). The asymmetrical rococo floral designs are relatively up-to-date stylistically, although the rosette reflects medieval design. The carved rosette on the front panel was neatly shaped with gouges, and the layout was adjusted to allow for placement of the escutcheon plate. The floral decorations are neatly carved and the dovetails are evenly spaced and executed in a workmanlike manner. The chest bottom is secured with angled wooden pins to prevent the bottom board from loosening. The pins extend through the front and side boards of the chest and were sawn flush after construction. This detail in particular suggests that the maker intended the chest to be painted, as the rough-sawn surface and exposed ends of the pins would not enhance the carefully carved design. The original hinges on this chest were small and neatly mortised into the underside of the chest lid—unlike the large, crudely machined, “hand-hammered” strap hinges which are so commonly added to New Mexican chests today in the mistaken belief that they add to the character of New Mexican furniture.

Post-Revolt wills and inventories suggest that more types of woodworking tools became available after the colony was reestablished in 1692. One will included a molding plane described as “a tool



Fig. 9.4
Bottom board, interior, Valdez chest,
showing prominent adze marks.
Courtesy Harwood Museum of
University of New Mexico.
(photo by author)

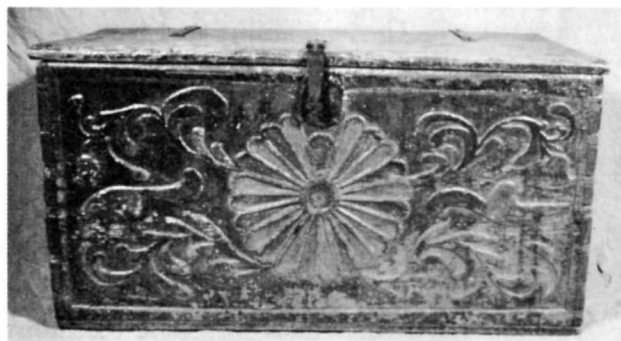


Fig. 9.5
Carved and painted chest attributed to Nicolas de Apodaca.
Courtesy Spanish Colonial Arts Society.



Fig. 9.6

Carved beam fragment from the mission church at Abó. Courtesy Laboratory of Anthropology, Museum of New Mexico. (photo by author)

for cutting grooves” (*canalador*).¹¹ Lathe-turned spindles are common on late eighteenth and early nineteenth century trasteros and interior doors, as well as on church choir and porch railings. Many carved chests from this period are decorated with rosettes skillfully shaped with gouges. Rosettes were also a common design feature on seventeenth-century mission church vigas, along with small circles outlined by two cuts with a gouge (Figure 9.6). As the population increased, more trained carpinteros emigrated to the province. The 1790 census lists eight carpinteros in Albuquerque and eighteen in Santa Fe. The pueblo of Pecos was recognized for the work of its

Indian carpinteros as early as the seventeenth century, and that tradition continued into the eighteenth century as well.

PAINTED FURNITURE

As with the exposed wooden pins in the Apodaca chest, many New Mexican furniture makers left layout lines scratched on prominent carved surfaces as well as on the stiles and rails of cabinet doors, and on raised panels. This practice also suggests that the makers expected their work to be painted. Layout lines and even saw marks on many pieces of eighteenth and nineteenth century New Mexican furniture only become visible after paint layers have been worn off or deliberately removed.

For example, in spite of its functional character and use in a storeroom, the Valdez chest described above was finished with a brown semi-transparent varnish.¹² The use of brown paint on a simple functional piece of New Mexican furniture is significant because it confirms that New Mexican craftsmen used paint to meet specific expectations about the appearance of the furniture they constructed. The availability of hardwoods in the northern provinces of Spain would explain the preference for a brown finish; it is unlikely that either the craftsman or the owner of the chest would have desired the lighter color of freshly cut pine boards, as most pine furniture at this time was painted, especially in southern and western Spain. Thus New Mexican craftsmen and patrons did not invent a new style of unfinished pine furniture, either out of necessity or preference. This brown coating represents a deliberate attempt to disguise the color of newly cut pine and create a piece of furniture similar in appearance to hardwood examples from northern Spain.

Another painted chest in the Harwood Foundation Museum collection offers an interesting comparison to the Valdez chest described above. This carved frame and panel chest is thought to have been made in Taos. Although it is obviously a more formal piece of furniture, the chest now has the dull brown appearance thought to be typical of New Mexican Spanish colonial furniture. This chest is one of the very few early pieces of New Mexican furniture which can be reliably dated. The inscription on the top rail states that the chest was made for don Manuel Martín in 1823 or 1826 (the last numeral being somewhat obscured). The Martíns were a relatively wealthy family of traders who lived in Taos and could afford luxury goods such as finely painted chests (Figure 9.7).

The original color scheme was bold and simple, with large areas of alternating red and blue patterns. Recent microscopic analysis by the author has shown that the colors were originally quite brilliant. Of particular importance are the individual pigments and the manner in which they were prepared and applied. The character of the red paint on this chest is different from most other painted New Mexican furniture. Although darkened with age, the red is still intensely red, almost a ruby color. The red pigment is vermilion, possibly synthetic, and was probably brought to New Mexico via the Camino Real rather than mined locally. This red pigment was finely ground and skillfully

prepared as a semi-transparent glaze rather than an opaque paint, and it was applied over a relatively thick white ground layer of calcium sulfate.

The blue paint is prussian blue. It was certainly brought to New Mexico, probably from Europe, over the Camino Real. It also was applied as a glaze on the white ground layer. Both vermilion and prussian blue are relatively bright pigments, especially when applied over a white ground. The technique enhances the reflection of light to produce brilliant colors, and it was well known to artists and craftsmen throughout Europe and the New World for hundreds of years. Its use is described in many seventeenth-century English craft and painters' manuals. The technique was also common on early eighteenth century painted furniture from Boston and the Connecticut River valley, where green glazes were sometimes applied over white lead grounds to produce more brilliant greens than can be attained with opaque pigments.¹³



Fig. 9.7

Carved and painted chest commissioned by don Manuel Martín of Taos. Courtesy Harwood Museum of University of New Mexico. (photo by author)

Evidence of this sophisticated artists' technique on an early nineteenth century chest in Taos raises questions about the commonly held belief that quality paint materials were unavailable in New Mexico. The man who commissioned this chest obviously desired bright colors and was willing to pay the additional costs not only of transportation and monopolistic trade practices, but also for the labor of a skilled craftsman trained in European painting techniques. If this level of taste seems sophisticated for Taos, recall that one eighteenth-century resident of the villa had 22 gilded picture frames in her adobe home (see Pierce and Snow, this volume).

Brightly colored red and blue furniture, however, does not fit well with Anglo assumptions of isolation and regression to brown, medieval furniture, and the present dull appearance of this chest is due to more than simple wear and history of use. An early twentieth century restorer who replaced missing portions of the lid and the top front rail apparently applied a green glaze to the entire chest in order to disguise his structural repair work, a common restorer's trick. Finely ground green pigment produces an excellent black glaze which can dull any surface, and this fact was well known to early twentieth century restorers. This type of restoration aesthetic would have been ideal for a piece of furniture intended for use in an Anglo-owned adobe home and artist's salon in northern New Mexico because it would fulfill turn-of-the-century Anglo expectations about New Mexican Hispanic culture. The commonly held belief has been that only "Mexicans" liked brightly colored furniture and Hispanic New Mexicans were somehow different, more conservative perhaps, in their decorative tastes. However, the man who originally owned this chest was a Mexican citizen living in a northern province of Mexico (New Mexico) when he commissioned the piece in the 1820s, and red and blue were both patriotic and popular.¹⁴

FURNITURE FROM MEXICO

Far from being satisfied with a crude and unsophisticated lifestyle, wealthy New Mexican patrons likely preferred the social cachet of owning luxury goods from other parts of the Viceroyalty of New



Fig. 9.8

*A gilt and painted writing desk from Michoacán.
Courtesy Spanish Colonial Arts Society. (photo by author)*

century (Taylor and Bokides 1987:9). In 1600, Captain Antonio Conde de Herrera brought with him to New Mexico “eight small chairs” and “one Michoacán table” (Hammond and Rey 1953[I]:539). A 1762 will listed “A Michoacán writing chest with three drawers with its table of same. It was valued because of its fine paint, excellent appearance and fine gold leaf, at 80 pesos” (SANM I:1055, will of Juan Montes Vigil, Santa Fe, April 30, 1762, translation by Donna Pierce) (Figure 9.8).

By the late eighteenth century, the simpler but distinctly painted Michoacán chests (*cajas de Michoacán*) had become a very desirable furnishing in many New Mexican homes. Inventories describe them as having been used “for keeping clothes.” These small chests are interpreted today as an inexpensive imitation of the true Oriental lacquerware which had become so popular in New Spain and Europe at the time. The joinery of these chests, particularly the unusual dovetail joints with wedges driven into the tails, suggests that the joints were quickly cut and assembled in a production-type method. The chests were then brightly painted with simple, standard neoclassical designs, and coated with a glossy varnish (Figure 9.9).

Cajas de Michoacán became an important trade item in the second half of the eighteenth century as the New Mexican sheep raising industry provided a viable trade commodity. From Michoacán, the chests were shipped in quantity to the Chihuahua trade fairs where they were bartered for New Mexican sheep and other products of the country. Well over a third of extant Spanish colonial New Mexican wills indicate ownership of at least one Michoacán chest. The number is probably underestimated, since in many wills husbands left all the household furniture to their wives without

Spain. The display of such possessions would have conspicuously confirmed their Spanish heritage and superior social status. Perhaps New Mexican patrons of means chose to commission local woodworkers chiefly to provide functional objects. Wealthy provincial patrons in New Mexico may have deliberately chosen to purchase finer furniture from urban craftsmen just as their wealthy counterparts did in Spain and other areas of Europe. Such decisions are based more on social considerations than on craft skills.

Understanding these kinds of decisions is essential to an accurate interpretation of the material culture of any provincial society. As a result of historical forces, the province of New Mexico is now separated from the Hispanic cities which historically influenced and provided much of its material culture. This modern political boundary has encouraged a mind set of interpreting objects fabricated in Mexico City and other urban centers as if they had been “imported” to New Mexico.

For example, the province of Michoacán became known for its European-trained native furniture makers as early as 1580, and this tradition continued through the nineteenth

itemizing individual objects. Cajas de Michoacán are always appraised at values significantly higher than those assigned to unpainted chests of local origin (12 pesos and more, rather than 3 or 4 pesos). The appraised values are not due to the increased labor of painting the chests, as the painted surfaces are clearly formulaic in character and must have been quickly executed. The higher monetary value reflects social valuation by upper-class buyers who could afford the costs of transportation and steep mark-ups by monopolistic traders in order to own and display fashionable furniture.

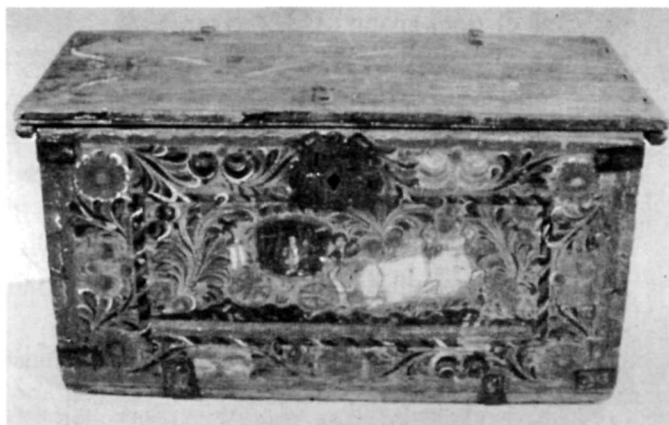


Fig. 9.9

Caja de Michoacán. Courtesy Spanish Colonial Arts Society.

TECHNOLOGY

Commerce on the Camino Real also included the transfer of European technology as well as woodworking tools and wooden artifacts. Many of the wooden objects listed above were obviously constructed locally, either by Spanish craftsmen or by craftsmen trained in the Spanish tradition working with European tools and design preferences brought to New Mexico via the Camino Real.

In describing the tasks of the friars in New Mexico, fray Alonso de Benavides stated in 1629, "The friar . . . feeds the poor and pays the various workers who come to build the churches" (Hodge et al. 1945:67, 102). At almost every pueblo, Benavides relates that the Franciscan friars established schools to instruct the Indians in the European mechanical arts (Hodge et al. 1945:67, 69–71; Ayers 1916:22–25, 33, 67; and in the Spanish facsimile, 103, 105, 106, 108, 171). This process was essential both to build the numerous mission structures and to develop self-sustaining economies on the estancia-type mission holdings. At Pecos Pueblo, Benavides wrote, "these Indians apply themselves the trade of carpentry; and they are good craftsmen since their minister brought them masters of the craft to teach them." It is likely that these carpinteros, like craftsmen everywhere, would have brought their own tools with them to practice their craft and instruct the native converts.

Pecos Pueblo was recognized early on for its European-trained woodworkers. By the mid seventeenth century, Pecos carpinteros traveled throughout New Mexico to prepare architectural woodwork for other mission churches and provided "dressed boards" as well. Eighteenth-century wills specifically attribute chairs, tables with drawers, beds, and kneading troughs to carpinteros from Pecos Pueblo (SANM I: 83, will of Diego Manuel Baca, Santa Fe, March 23, 1727). The carpinteros of Pecos Pueblo also often fulfilled their labor requirements under the encomienda system by preparing boards and building doors and windows for the governors' *obrajes* (workshops) in Santa Fe (Kubler 1939:27).¹⁵



Fig. 9.10

Side chair with carved designs, attributed to Cochiti Pueblo. Courtesy Palace of the Governors, Museum of New Mexico. (photo by author)

One distinct group of carved tables and chairs has tentatively been associated with the workshop at Cochiti Pueblo (Taylor and Bokides 1987:67, 80, 81, 97). The chairs in this group are generally regarded as quintessentially New Mexican in character, probably because they are simply made, and now usually weathered and unpainted as well (Figure 9.10). If these chairs seem relatively unsophisticated, it is probably because there was a market demand at the time for cheap chairs, not because local woodworkers were unskilled or lacked proper tools and training (although some obviously did). Characterizing Hispanic New Mexican material culture from one type of object such as these chairs would be similar to characterizing English colonial culture in North America by studying only Windsor chairs.

In seventeenth-century New Mexico, Franciscan mission churches contained complex wooden architectural elements including altar screens (*retablos*), pulpits, carved beams (*vigas labradas*),¹⁶ corbels, stairs, and railings. Many owned organs purchased in Mexico City and shipped to New Mexico via the Camino Real. At least one mission church had a complex coffered ceiling. During his 1776 visitation, fray Francisco Antanasio Domínguez wrote of the ceiling in the then ruined church at Sandia Pueblo, "It is said the old ceiling was *artesonado*."¹⁷ In 1630, Benavides wrote (probably with some exaggeration) that "there have been built more than fifty churches with roofs [with] very beautiful carvings and fretwork."¹⁸ These elements were probably fabricated by, or under the direction of, Spanish-trained carpinteros.

The existence of coffered ceilings strongly suggests the presence in New Mexico of skilled woodworkers trained in the techniques specific to the guild of the carpinteros de lo blanco.¹⁹ So do the numerous church and *zaguan* (large framed entryway) doors with "wickets" (a door within a larger door), many of which are described by Domínguez in 1776 (Adams and Chávez 1956:14, 52, 64). Both types of architectural woodwork were traditionally fashioned by members of this Spanish woodworking guild.

STYLE OF NEW MEXICAN FURNITURE

Although numerous early and mid eighteenth century wills list "old" furniture, no existing New Mexican furniture can be reliably attributed to the early eighteenth century. Since virtually all of the material brought to New Mexico on the Camino Real before 1680 was destroyed during the Pueblo Revolt, archaeological fragments of furniture and architectural elements are the only artifacts available to study woodworking techniques from this period. A few of the fragments were carefully carved and gilded or painted.

The outdated style of New Mexican Spanish colonial furniture has led to the perception of that material as *retarditare* and unique to New Mexico. Actually, virtually identical objects, particularly carved chests, are found in northern Mexico (and were often transported to New Mexico to be sold at considerably higher prices). It is true that the structure and form of furniture used in New Mexico generally reflected a style which was dated in comparison to tastes in other parts of the world, but this practice is not unique to New Mexico. Boyd (1974:246) has suggested that outdated styles were due to an inherent conservatism in Spanish society, particularly in provincial areas. Donna Pierce (1990:364) notes that as styles changed, the common practice was to apply currently fashionable decorations to outdated sixteenth-century Spanish rectangular forms, including "Rococo decoration [which] was inspired by a revival of Mannerist elements including scallops, ovals and strapwork." Some New Mexican wooden objects exhibit such design details. Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century New Mexican altar screens commonly include oval picture frames flanked by modified *estepité* columns. Cartouches and crests often show the unmistakable auricular line characteristic of the rococo style. One carved New Mexican chest (the Martín chest described above) and a few low

tables (including one mistakenly described as a bench) include scalloped rails.

Archaic forms in the decorative arts persisted in the provincial areas of Spain as well, and even became a key element in a chauvinistic style that was intended to reintroduce a Spanish identity to decorative arts which had been strongly influenced by other European interpretations of the late baroque and neoclassical styles. Therefore, the provincial style of New Mexican furniture is not evidence of the isolation of the province, as so many early historians of New Mexico had assumed. It is simply an expression of conservative provincial cultural attitudes and accepted styles in the decorative arts.

SUMMARY

Modern beliefs about the crudity of New Mexican Spanish colonial furniture are certainly a holdover of pervasive nineteenth-century Anglo cultural prejudices (Weber 1988). Although such prejudices have been thoroughly discredited, they still influence current understanding of New Mexico's Spanish colonial culture. Modern perceptions of Hispanic New Mexican material culture have been filtered through more than a century of cultural misunderstanding and misinterpretation based on historic political agendas which are irrelevant to the original material, and the culture that produced it. Lonn Taylor (1994) addressed this problem when he said, "part of the process of creating a comfortable relationship with an indigenous Hispanic culture that had been often described by Anglo-Americans as inferior and even 'mongrel' was to invent a romanticized past for that culture." That need to invent a romanticized past continues to influence modern perceptions of Hispanic New Mexican material culture, especially its Spanish colonial furniture. The misinterpretation of adze marks and woodworking technology is just one such example which reenforces modern cultural myths of a quaint but backwards and unsophisticated Hispanic culture in New Mexico.

The arbitrary exclusion of "Mexican" furniture from studies of New Mexican material culture has furthered these misconceptions by arbitrarily separating New Mexican furniture from the Mexican models from which it is derived. Studying Camino Real documents and Spanish colonial wooden objects and technology exposes the fallacy of trying to appreciate Spanish colonial New Mexican furniture as social history by studying only artifacts which were actually produced in the province of New Mexico. Defined as such, New Mexican material culture cannot begin to convey a historically accurate picture of life in Spanish colonial New Mexico because it does not include many of the everyday objects which were integral to the lifestyle and self image of New Mexico's early Hispanic inhabitants. Objects traded on the Camino Real were a critical element in defining the Spanish identity of many New Mexicans, even those who were too poor to own them. The style and meaning of that material reflected their underlying concepts of themselves and their attitudes toward the world around them.

Although very little of seventeenth and early eighteenth century Spanish material culture in New Mexico has survived to be studied today, especially wooden artifacts, the important fact remains that these objects were used by early New Mexicans in their daily lives at a time when life in New Mexico was presumably difficult and certainly did not match the standards of comfort and wealth attained in other parts of New Spain. The wooden objects and other material culture brought to New Mexico on the Camino Real were undoubtedly the most artistically sophisticated to be found in the province, and the fact that scarce resources were expended to purchase these objects and ship them to New Mexico emphasizes the psychological significance that the Camino Real held for Spanish and Hispanic settlers living in the *provincias internas*, on the northern frontier of New Spain. ♣

NOTES

1. Notable exceptions are the introductory essay in Taylor and Bokides 1987 and Pierce 1989. The authors postulate the influence of guild training on the development of New Mexican woodworking.
2. In the early 1950s E. Boyd speculated that New Mexican woodworkers may have used riven boards but did not pursue the matter (Richard Ahlborn, personal communication).
3. In 1624, fray Alonzo Benavides' supplies included "Four saws, three of them small at 20 reales each and the large one, twenty pesos" (Hodge et al. 1945:117).
4. The saw is owned by Dr. Ward Alan Minge, historian and collector of New Mexican furniture. This saw could have been brought to New Mexico via either the Santa Fe Trail or the Camino Real. The 1929 H. L. Disston and Sons tool catalog still listed pit saws, and company records show that pit saws were regularly sold in the Latin American market at least until that time. Personal communication, Vernon Ward, antique tool expert and editor of *The Fine Tool Journal*.
5. Personal communication, John Vincent, a furniture maker and restorer from Lyden, New Mexico.
6. A number of species of white and yellow pine are common in the mountains of New Mexico and northern Mexico. Difficulties of attributions based on wood identification are discussed in an unpublished paper by the author.
7. According to a 1990 bulletin of the Historic Santa Fe Foundation, machinery from the circular sawmill on the Santa Fe River was purchased by Cerain Saint-Vrain in 1852.
8. Cordelia Snow, personal communication.
9. In letters cited by Oliva referring to the mule-driven saws the writers complain that the saws were prone to frequent breakdown. Antique tool expert Vernon Ward suggests that this information would most likely indicate a circular saw. He bases this opinion on the fact that circular saws operated at higher speeds than mill-driven straight saws, generating greater forces which exceeded the reliability of the metal bearings available at the time.
10. One mimeographed publication from the 1930s ("Rural Industrial Arts for New Mexico" n.d.: 15–16) recommends following gouge cuts with a skew chisel to smooth out the background areas of carved designs, but this advice seems to have been generally ignored by many Hispanic and Anglo woodworkers, designers, and teachers working in the 1930s. For example, see Williams 1941:8–10. Under the heading "Practical Details of Design," Williams states, "The surrounding surface [of carved rosettes] is left with the gouge marks." Mr. Williams was a woodworking instructor in both public and Indian schools in the Southwest during the 1930s, and he passed this advice on to Indian and Hispanic students who were supposedly studying their own cultural heritage. Also, the designer William Penhollow Henderson exhibited a predilection for covering every uncarved furniture surface with deliberately exaggerated adze marks.
11. SANM: 968, will of Lugarda Quintana, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, May 12, 1749. The quote is from the WPA translation.
12. Preliminary results of microscopic research by the author will be published as Wooden Artifact Group postprints of the 1995 conference of the American Institute of Conservation.
13. Frances Safford, in a catalog of American colonial furniture from New England at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
14. Donna Pierce provided this insight into the patriotic use of colors.
15. Personal letters of governor don Bernardo López de Mendezabal, and documents from the residencia of governor Félix Martínez, quoted in Kessell 1979:177–178 and 321.
16. Adams and Chavez (1956) and others often translate *labrada* as "wrought," a term more appropriate for metal. In English the term is also used to describe a beam that has been squared from the log with an adze, but in Spanish when referring to wooden objects the term can also mean carved.
17. Adams and Chavez (1956:139) translate the term as "coved," but their inclusion of the Spanish term in the text implies a tentative interpretation. Adeline and Mélida (n.d.) use an illustration of a coffered construction to define the term. Grace Hardendorff Burr translates the term as "coffered" in her introduction to *Muebles Antiguo Españoles* by Rafael Doménech (Galissá) and Luis Pérez Bueno (1965:12, 19).
18. "cincuenta Inglefias de techos mui curiofos grauados y laceria, y las paredes muy bien pintadas" (Ayers 1916:33, 121). Curiofos (curiosos) can also be translated as careful rather than beautiful (Ayers 1916) or curious (Hodge et al. 1945).
19. For descriptions of guild regulations and coffered Mudéjar-style ceilings, see López de Arenas (1633; reprinted in 1912).

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Saltillo Sarapes

Mark Winter



THE USE OF COTTON and various plant fibers for weaving was widely practiced in the New World centuries before the Roman legions marched through Europe. Textiles and knowledge of spinning, dyeing, and weaving were distributed throughout the Americas via an extensive network of trade routes.

Prehistoric textiles did not survive in many parts of Mexico and Central America because of the humid climate and the funerary practices of the indigenous people. However, the early textiles that were preserved in the drier areas of South America and northern Mexico, including the area now known as New Mexico, give us a glimpse of the incredible weaving skills of the Native American people.

In the present-day state of Chihuahua in northern Mexico, treasure hunters have unearthed early textiles in a burial cave. The complex designs of these finely woven textiles is achieved by the use of small, repeating geometric figures, not dissimilar to what is found later in the Saltillo sarape.

Further north, Anasazi textiles from prehistoric times in New Mexico and Arizona reveal a similarly high degree of weaving skills. The well-known precolumbian textiles from South America also demonstrate complex weaves and a large vocabulary of sophisticated designs.

Many early indigenous New World textiles show a tendency toward elaborate designing. This was often accomplished by a combination of painting on or dyeing of woven cloth. The use of alternating warp or weft colors could create patterning, while weft-faced tapestry with interlocking joints was used for the more complex designs. It was this technique that the Saltillo sarape weavers later adopted.

Apparently, wool was rarely used in New World textiles. The only known wool was from alpaca, llama, and vicuna in South America and mountain sheep in North America. Because of its rarity, it was highly valued and was used in only the most expensive or prized garments.

SPANISH CONQUEST AND SETTLEMENT

When Columbus landed in the Bahama Islands in 1492, it was the desire for a quicker trade route to the Orient that had inspired his voyages and ensuing encounter with the New World. His belief that

he was near India (and subsequent naming of the natives as “Indians”) was supported partially because of the cotton clothing worn by the natives he encountered.

In the 1400s there were only two existing trade routes to bring the riches of the Orient to Europe. One was the overland route, which required negotiating or fighting with hostiles, including the Moors. The other was a sea route around the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa. It entailed sailing against the prevailing winds and through waters controlled by the Dutch, who were not friendly toward the Spanish.

Continuing the Spanish conquest, Cortés sailed westward from Cuba in 1519 and landed on the eastern coast of Mexico. Staunchly believing in his mission, this true conquistador required that their ships be burned in front of his men to be sure they knew there was no turning back. Soon they would march against and conquer the great Aztec Empire of which they had heard wondrous stories of vast riches. Cortés and his troops set out toward the great city of Montezuma, Tenochtitlan (later Mexico City), located on the high inland plain of Mexico.

En route, Cortés encountered the Tlaxcalans, the mountain Indians of central Mexico. In contrast to their surrounding neighbors, this fiercely independent tribe had maintained autonomy from the dominating Aztecs. The Tlaxcalans made several formidable attempts to hold off the Spanish invaders. Yet in spite of their massive numbers compared with Cortés’ handful of men, they succumbed to the Spanish. Cortés then engaged the Tlaxcalans as allies in the conquest of their mortal enemies, the Aztecs. In his quest to prevail over Montezuma, Cortés was able to use this alliance to his ultimate advantage.

Chroniclers of Cortés’ expedition described the Tlaxcalan people as being very well dressed. Their costumes and armor of cotton and leather were adorned with precious metals and brilliantly colored feathers. Textiles also played a strategic role as the Tlaxcalan cotton shields and armor replaced the heavy metal apparatus the Spanish carried. The native equipment was superior in terms of its light weight and convenience and was equally effective for defense against the weaponry of the Aztecs.

After the fall of the Aztec Empire and colonization of Mexico began, the Spanish maintained their friendly relations with the Tlaxcalans. Some of them even accompanied Coronado in 1540 as far north as the Pueblo of Zuni in New Mexico.

By the early 1600s trade routes north were well established and Santa Fe was declared the capital of the Spanish territory of New Mexico. Subsequent settlements tended to be located along these trade routes, the primary of which eventually became known as El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.

The Spanish used the Tlaxcalans in a pattern of pacification by which they settled northern areas of New Spain, including Chihuahua, Durango, San Luis Potosi, San Miguel Allende, Monterrey, and Saltillo. The Tlaxcalans served to demonstrate to the hostile native people of the north, called Chichimecas, that trade with the Spanish was beneficial. This strategy was instrumental in enticing the natives into cooperation rather than requiring total subjugation by force. In return for their help, the Tlaxcalans received greater rights and privileges from the Spanish. The word “Tlaxcalan” had a positive or favorable connotation in New Spain.

In approximately 1575 four hundred Tlaxcalan families settled an area originally called San Esteban de Nuevo Tlaxcala in the present-day state of Coahuila. This later became the city of Saltillo. Accompanying the Tlaxcalan settlers was Captain Juan Sanchez Navarro, who emigrated to New Spain around 1550, drifted to the northern frontier, and was instrumental in the development of the new community. He established a family whose descendants would play a major role in the future of the state of Coahuila and the surrounding region.

The Tlaxcalans evidently continued their tradition of weaving high-quality textiles as Saltillo became a location often associated in early documents with good textiles, especially sarapes.

WOOL

The first sheep were brought to the New World by Columbus on his second voyage. Spanish explorations, including Coronado's 1540 expedition, spread numerous domestic sheep, cattle, and horses into the northern regions. In 1598 don Juan Oñate brought numerous churro sheep as far north as New Mexico. The inspection record of his party listed "meat and wool sheep," consisting of 383 rams and 3,517 ewes.

The churro's coarse wool initially made them less prized for wool than meat. However, the hardy breed proved to be very adaptable to the climate of the New World and thrived on its vast grazing lands. The straight and hard fibers of churro wool had a naturally worsted quality. The fibers could be readily separated into fine threads, making it particularly well-suited for the New World style of hand spinning and weaving. In addition, because of its low lanolin content only minimal cleaning of the wool was necessary. This correlated well with the arid climate and scarcity of water, particularly in the northern settlements. Churro wool was also very compatible with the superb natural dyes that were available.

In Spain, the merino breed was prized for its wool and generally reserved for royalty. Exportation of these sheep was forbidden by Spanish law and punishable by death. We currently know of only two small herds being brought to the New World in colonial times. One herd was given to Cortés as a gift for his conquest of Mexico by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain and was confined at his hacienda in Oaxaca. The other, smaller herd was given to the first viceroy of Mexico, don Antonio de Mendoza, and was kept southeast of Mexico City. These coveted herds were well protected, and it is believed that merino sheep did not reach the northern territories until the nineteenth century.

When the Spanish conquest of the Americas was followed by that of the Philippines in 1565, the Spaniards were able to secure a safe route to transport the Oriental treasures of spices, ceramics, silks, and textiles home to Spain. Following prevailing winds, Spanish sailors developed a route from Manila northward to a point where they could cross the Pacific. They would then sail from the northwest coast of North America south to the port of Acapulco. The Manila Bay Company ran this route as the longest continuous shipping line, operating for 250 years from 1565 to 1815. In Acapulco valuable goods from the Orient were loaded onto caravans. They were carried overland through the cities of Puebla or Jalapa and on to Vera Cruz on the Caribbean. Once a year in October the "treasure fleets" departed from Vera Cruz, headed for Spain with a great wealth of goods from both Mexico and the Orient. "Pirates of the Caribbean" from rival countries did their best to redirect the treasures to their own destinations.

In order to control his New World holdings, the King of Spain allowed international commerce to be carried out only in these two ports, Acapulco on the Pacific and Vera Cruz on the Caribbean. This spurred development of a system of internal trade fairs from Oaxaca in the south to the northern most trade fair at Taos in New Mexico. Chihuahua and Saltillo were primary sites where large trade fairs were established by the early seventeenth century. Early traders used the Camino Real to move goods from one fair to another. The cities of Puebla and Jalapa to the south served as crossroads for both the north-south and east-west trade routes.

The Saltillo Trade Fair became famous throughout New Spain. Thanks to its location on major trade routes, Saltillo's commerce thrived well into the 1800s. Held the last week of September, the annual event transformed the city, filling it to overflowing with merchants, traders, and the settlers of the northern expanse. Numerous local goods including livestock, hides, wool, cotton, various agricultural products, textiles, and, of course, Saltillo sarapes, were exchanged for finished products from as far away as Europe and the Orient. Gambling, fiestas, bullfights, cockfights, and horse races added to the bustling excitement of the commercial activity.

Initially, textiles were sold regionally, but with the development of trade routes and fairs the markets expanded to reach nearly half of the colony's population. Methods of marketing were diverse. Individual weavers would collect the products of family members, sell them at the fair, and return home to divide the profits. On a larger scale, textiles were widely distributed by traveling merchants and through a varied network of regional brokers.

According to trade records from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Río Grande sarapes from New Mexico as well as other textiles were exported south to Mexico in great numbers. Based on declared values these sarapes were probably utilitarian in nature rather than being highly decorated. Master weavers such as the Bazan Brothers were sent north from Mexico City to the Río Grande Valley in 1807 to improve the quality of the weaving. They were believed to have knowledge of the fine Saltillo sarapes.

Because of their rarity and high cost (up to 50 times the price of more basic sarapes), Saltillo sarapes were not commonly mentioned as trade items, but some were certainly carried north on the Camino Real to New Mexico. Rather than being for sale, these fine textiles were probably obtained and worn by the wealthy merchants traveling on the trail. Their influence was widespread, as blankets with Saltillo-inspired designs are even seen in nineteenth-century drawings made by Plains Indians on ledger or account books. These could depict actual Saltillos or could represent the Río Grande and Navajo blankets that copied the sarape design system.

D Y E S

The native dyes of the New World were quickly recognized and considered to be some of the best in the world. In addition to indigo and Campeche wood, cochineal was particularly significant in the development of Spanish Empire trade. Desired for the brilliant red and purple hues derived from it, cochineal or grana was the second most valuable export out of the New World during the colonial period, surpassed only by the large quantities of precious metals. It virtually eliminated all competitors from the dye market on the European continent through a tightly controlled Spanish monopoly. There is very little record of cochineal being traded along the Camino Real. Sarape weavers must have had a method of acquiring cochineal that was not recorded in historical documents.

While most native dyes such as indigo came from vegetal sources, cochineal is derived from the dried bodies of an insect (*Coccus cacti*) which propagates on the Mexican nopal cactus. The wingless females of the species grow from eggs deposited on the cactus. They attach themselves to the leaves while they grow and reproduce. Once new eggs have been left behind, the adults are harvested, killed, and dried. Cochineal harvesting was a laborious process as approximately 70,000 of the minute insects are required for a single pound of dried dyestuff. The extravagant expense and its relative scarcity explain the long-held association of red hues with the highest levels of wealth and royalty.

As early as 1600, cochineal production and export had been greatly developed and expanded. The Spanish instituted extensive scientific studies to refine the harvesting and curing methods. They standardized the product through a detailed grading process and codified methods of quality control. Legislation established an extensive bureaucracy to address the various aspects of production and marketing. The extent of these developments attests to the value of this extraordinary dyestuff.

Cochineal production continued to increase in the 1700s and became a fundamental element of the Mexican economy. The industry thrived until the development of synthetic dyes around 1860 caused its virtual collapse. Cochineal simply could not compete with the convenience and affordability of the new dyes.

Anil or indigo, derived from an indigenous plant, was also widely used and traded. It is often listed

in trade permits called *guias* that were issued for commerce along the Camino Real. Indigo produces a brilliant, colorfast blue in many hues and could be mixed with yellow vegetal dyes to produce various shades of green. Although New World cultures were already using indigo, the Spanish introduced Old World varieties, believing they were of better quality. Use of indigo continued well after the introduction of synthetic dyes because it resists fading in the sun.

L O O M S

The original New World looms were of a simple backstrap type. The warps were separated and secured on one end by a rod that was attached to a stationary object such as a tree at a height somewhat above the weaver. The rod on the other end was held by a strap around the back of the weaver. To use the loom, the weaver, typically a woman, would kneel and lean away from the elevated and secured end to create the necessary warp tension and working surface at a suitable level in front of them. (The Pueblo or Navajo type upright loom is basically a backstrap loom with end rods secured top and bottom to keep the loom in tension.) Most prehistoric textiles produced on the backstrap loom are warp-faced. During the colonial period some ponchos and tapestries produced on the backstrap loom were of weft-faced tapestry.

The desire to create a greater number of textiles for export necessitated the adoption of the European treadle loom to increase production. These looms had foot controls to manipulate the warp for the insertion of the weft. They allowed for the warp tension necessary to produce the more complex weft-faced designs such as those seen in the Saltillo sarape.

The traditional guild system brought from Europe accompanied use of this loom and textile production in Mexico. Men were the primary operators of the imported looms, and the guild instituted specialization in the various weaving skills. One person would card and spin the warp and weft materials. A second would be an expert in dye preparation and use; another perhaps in warping and preparing the loom for weaving. A fourth would be the master weaver. In the case of the Saltillo sarapes, he would perform his magic at the loom by weaving the intricate designs. Because many sarapes were woven in two separate halves, a fifth person (perhaps one of those mentioned above) would carefully seam the sarape to ensure it remained waterproof. Then he would spin, knot, fringe, or in some way finish the warp ends of the completed sarape. Often a thin piece of fine velvet or silk was added around the “*bocamanga*” (neck opening) to accent it further.

Weaving workshops, called *obrajes*, developed extensively throughout Mexico and incorporated the European treadle loom. The colony became a significant textile producer for both local consumption and trade to Europe. One eighteenth-century observer went so far as to say that the wealth of New Spain lay in its sheep and looms, not in its mines.

Based on the descriptions of *obrajes* as sweatshops, it is unlikely that textiles as fine as Saltillo sarapes were woven in the larger workshops. More likely they were made in small *telares sueltos* or *trapiches*, in which individual looms were owned by *hacendados* (the hacienda owners) or artisan weavers. Various classes of weavers ranged from the prosperous artisans to the working poor or *sirvientes* who worked in the larger *obrajes*. A 1793 survey suggested that there were 7,800 *telares sueltos* in New Spain and only 39 *obrajes*, indicating the prevalence of smaller weaving shops in the late colonial period.

As human population and the related agricultural industry grew in south-central Mexico, livestock production was pushed farther north onto the expansive grazing lands. Similarly, weavers followed the wool sources. In Saltillo, the woolen weavers were able to purchase wool directly from the producers, the largest of whom were the Sanchez Navarro family.

By 1800, the Sanchez Navarros had amassed an immense landholding consisting of numerous

haciendas, known as a *latifundio*. Saltillo and its trade fair provided a local market for the wool from their approximately 300,000 sheep. Large amounts of their wool and skins were processed in Saltillo. In addition, local artisans wove sarapes, blankets, and woolen cloth for the large family, ranch managers, and peons on the latifundio. When such direct measures were not possible, wool was typically distributed through a network of brokers further south in Mexico.

In order to supply their own wool and eliminate the middleman, many urban textile producers invested in ranches. Likewise many ranch owners established small obrajes on the individual haciendas to supply the needs of their workers, often confined to remote locations. Mentions of the first hacienda-based obrajes appear as early as the 1760s and again in 1777 by Father Morfi at the Hacienda de Patos, which later became one of the primary residences of the Sánchez Navarro family. Obrajes are also reported on the Sánchez Navarro's Hermanas hacienda and at their Trapado hacienda in the 1820s. All of these locations are in the region of Saltillo.

For production of the finest of the Saltillo-style sarapes, the individual weaving workshops on the hacienda would also provide the greatest quality control. Sheep were probably bred specifically for the long and straight fibers that could be spun into the exceptionally fine yarns seen in the early sarapes. The weaving of a superlative textile such as a Saltillo sarape might have required the protected environment of a hacienda.

DEVELOPMENT OF SPANISH SOCIETY IN THE NEW WORLD

In the Spanish Crown's attempts to maintain control of its valuable colony, a rigid class system, called *las castas*, was imposed in Mexico. It designated the individual classes for purposes of social status and taxation.

The highest class consisted of the peninsulars or *gauchapines*. These Spanish purebloods, born on the Iberian peninsula, were the only ones allowed to hold major positions in the government or church. When vacated, these positions were filled by a new peninsular rather than by natural succession to a creole underling. Some women were sent back to Spain specifically to give birth so their children would be peninsulars.

The class below the peninsulars was the creoles, those of "pure" Spanish blood but born in the New World. Creoles could not hold the highest offices in church or state. However, they could own property and did so on a grand scale, building up vast haciendas and latifundios. These Spanish American landowners became known as the creole hacendados.

The next class was the mestizos, those of mixed Spanish and Indian blood. The mother of this class was Molintzin, the daughter of a "cacique" (native chief), who, having been a slave among the Mayans of Tabasco, was given to Cortés in 1519. Called Marina by the Spanish, she translated for Cortés throughout his conquest and eventually bore him several children.

Most of the early Spanish soldiers of fortune that came to the New World took Indian wives, who bore a sizable population of mestizos. After two generations, descendants of mestizos were considered creole as long as intervening marriages were to creoles or peninsulars. This system enabled the children of the early settlers to raise their social and economic position by simply overlooking their Indian ancestry.

Many more classes existed, the lowest of which were the native Indians. Although Negro slavery was not as widely practiced in Mexico as it was in the United States, many people of African descent ended up in Mexico. Numerous *castas* were established for blacks who married Spaniards, creoles, mestizos, or Indians and their offspring.

The king, through his agents, imposed what were called "sumptuary laws," which required

colonists of each class to dress in a style dictated by the Crown. One such law was intended to prevent the residents of New Spain from out-dressing their continental counterparts, especially when coming to Europe to trade.

Since the exquisite Saltillo sarape was developed outside the sumptuary laws, it was not included in the strict dress codes. Possibly serving as a regional badge of independence, the fine sarapes could have represented the free spirit of the northern creoles and mestizos. This could explain the scarcity of depictions of the Saltillo sarape prior to Mexican Independence. Perhaps it would have been neither proper nor advisable to be depicted in such a garment, especially in an image as permanent as a painting. The avoidance of taxation on such a luxury item could also have influenced records pertaining to the sarape's early history.

The lower-class peon, or "man on foot," was not allowed to own or ride a horse in the New World. In the northern territories, however, the favored Tlaxcalans were allowed to ride and own horses, a privilege held exclusively for those of Spanish descent in the urban areas. It was among the elite group of northern Mexican horsemen that the sarape probably developed, being a most practical riding garment. Edward Thornton Tayloe extolled the functional qualities of the sarape in his journal of travels in Mexico in 1825: "Having traveled ten hours without stopping—five of them through a tremendous rain, from which I was completely sheltered by a sarape, armas de aqua and botas, excellent contrivances which a foreigner should never fail at once to adopt."

HACIENDAS AND THE HORSE CULTURE

The vast haciendas that fostered the horse culture of Mexico were acquired through relationships that entwined families with state, church, and business. The haciendas provided the extended families access to capital and thereby the means to purchase additional lands. Landholdings were the wealth basis needed to diversify from agriculture into mining and trade.

The latifundio of the Sanchez Navarro family, with its roots in Saltillo, reached its height in the late 1700s and early 1800s at 17.1 million acres. It was the largest estate ever owned by a single family in the New World.

The concentration of great wealth in the Sanchez Navarro and other hacendado families afforded them many creative ways to overcome limitations imposed by the Crown. Their family connections to government gave them the political influence they needed. It was common for creole women from these large families to marry peninsular men, thereby gaining direct access to those in high office. Large landowners even altered political boundaries to their advantage. State boundaries changed frequently, and the town of Saltillo appears in at least three different states during colonial times. (This may also be a result of mapping inaccuracies, but probably to a lesser degree than political maneuvering.)

Historical records indicate that haciendas commonly reported little or no profit to the Crown and church in order to lessen the amount that had to be paid in taxes and tithes. Their reputation for not being economically viable belies the various roles the hacienda played in the overall family wealth structure. Certainly the haciendas could have been an easy place to hide wealth. In addition, the holding of land was fundamental to many other wealth-producing activities. Trade was facilitated by family relationships with merchants. Many haciendas supported mining operations by producing the goods necessary to clothe and feed the mine workers as well as the hides and cloth for sacks to transport mined products. Reinforcing hacendado families' considerable control over government, family ties to decision-making church officials allowed for untold advantages in land purchases and other dealings. For example, in at least one instance the Sanchez Navarros won the bidding process to purchase a large acreage when a family member was the church official who managed the "public bids."

Personal prestige was often as important, or perhaps more important, than actual wealth. This is reflected in possessions such as the hacienda itself, large herds of livestock, numerous employees (often bound by debt peonage), and lavish material effects, including extravagant riding accouterments such as the elaborately woven Saltillo sarape. Prominently listed among the possessions in the will of one Sanchez Navarro family member were items of valuable riding apparel.

The role of the horse was especially significant in the north as it was essential to the operation of such large expanses of land. Pride in horsemanship was initially derived from Spain, but the traditional “a la brida” school of riding used by heavily armored warriors was abandoned by the conquistadors. They adopted the “a la jineta” school, which employed a lighter, more versatile saddle and style of riding. In South America, Garcilasco de la Vega, an Incan native, said, “My country was conquered a la jineta.” Originally a Moslem import and derived from the Zenete tribe of Berber horsemen, “a la jineta” was further adapted by colonists to conditions in the New World. The modifications to saddles and bridles continued, often for the specific purposes of the hacendados and to increase the comfort and general suitability of riding gear.

The horse culture was also enhanced by such colorful characters as the *mayadormos* (ranch mangers), *rancheros* (small ranch owners), and the Mexican *vaquero* (the original cowboy). These were proud horsemen who traveled great distances and were expert at handling livestock.

George W. Hughes’s 1850 memoir of the U.S. army march from San Antonio, Texas, to Saltillo, Mexico, described the *vaquero* as follows: “Fancy to yourself a rather light colored Indian, dressed in a pair of leather unmentionables, without suspenders, buttoning from the knee downwards, which are usually left open in warm weather for comfort, and to exhibit the white drawers underneath; a common cotton shirt, often wanting; a red sash tied tightly around his waist; a pair of sandals on his feet, and enormous iron spurs on heel; with a heavy conical felt hat (that would almost resist a saber cut) on head, and a long iron-pointed goad in hand and you have a perfect picture of the *ranchero*, or rather *vachero*. Mounted on a spirited pony, with a lasso at his saddle-bow, he is no mean adversary for a single man to encounter. He rides well and fearlessly, and throws the lasso with unerring aim. It is a beautiful sight to see him with his red blanket (worn as a poncho in cold weather) streaming in the wind, his head bent eagerly forward, and lasso whirling in circles high in air, riding down some refractory animal that he seldom fails to catch, at the first throw, by the neck or hind foot, bringing him violently to the ground.”

In 1859, Carl Christian Wilhelm Satorious emphasized the importance of the sarape: “Never is the coat missing with the rider, rain or shine. Whether it is the colorful Sarape or the one colored Manga. Both are woolen and 2 klafeter long and one klafeter wide. In the middle is a lengthwise opening (this slit one shoe long) which is usually seamed with velvet and embroidered with gold and silver fringes through which the head is put when it rains. The coat covers the whole body. When the weather is good, the mantle is thrown lightly around the shoulder. But without it no Mexican leaves his house, neither on horse nor on foot. It is his ‘Good Manner’ dress, his ‘Toga’ which he wears at the market and at church and only takes off when he works at home.”

Competitions began among these horsemen, perhaps initially at the trade fairs to prove their equestrian skills. These contests probably fostered the modern-day rodeo. This competitiveness extended to wearing apparel and provided the motivation for continued elaboration and refinement.

ORIGINS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SALTILLO SARAPE

Although the poncho is considered New World attire, the Saltillo sarape seems to have no clear ancestor either in the Old or the New World. It does, however, borrow characteristics from garments of both cultures. The closest New World prototype is the Aztec *tilma*, which was depicted in painted manuscripts known as codices. At the directive of Viceroy Mendoza, the Aztecs of Central Mexico painted the Codex Mendoza to record and explain the Aztec culture to the Spanish king. Covering the period from 1325 to 1521, it illustrates the tilma as a shorter, poncholike garment often tied at one or both shoulders. It featured designs with diamond centers and matching borders.

Similarly, Saltillo sarapes were fashioned in a three-part design system with a central diamond or scallop medallion that accentuated the head when worn as a poncho; small, finely detailed borders that typically matched the center in design or color; and a background field to contrast or tie the two elements together.

The influence of the Spanish cape or *capa*, a large overcoat with an open front and usually a hood, may also be a factor in the development of the sarape.

Another garment similar in style to the sarape was the Mexican *manga*. Somewhat smaller, they were rectangular with a poncho slit in the center. Mangas were made of expensive cloth with patterns embroidered in fine yarns of silk, gold, and silver. The most elaborate mangas had precious jewels sewn into the designs. They usually had a centrally placed overlay to accentuate the wearer's head, as well as matching borders. Mangas were presumably more expensive than sarapes because of the use of expensive materials. Nebel's 1836 painting portrays a hacendado wearing an elaborate manga. The accompanying mayadormo has a classic Saltillo sarape draped over the rear of his saddle, in the preferred position when not being worn. The Saltillo sarape may be a regional style of manga developed to emulate the more expensive garment, utilizing what the northern hacendados had on hand: quality wool and skilled weavers.

Most literature suggests, but does not offer certainty, that the sarape originated in the northern region of Mexico. The word "sarape" became synonymous with Saltillo, where exceptionally fine ones were produced. Other known late colonial sarape-producing locations include Patos, Queretaro, San Miguel Allende, Santa Anna Chiautempan, Puebla, Oaxaca, Mier, Camargo, and New Mexico.

Traders on the Camino Real provided materials and dyes for the splendid colors and perhaps these same traders acquired fine sarapes to wear themselves. This would help explain the eventual spread of the Saltillo style. By 1800, I suggest that they were being made on haciendas and in small workshops in locations as widespread as Oaxaca in the south (or perhaps even as far south as Guatemala) all the way to New Mexico. A small sarape collected in Guatemala in the 1860s (now in the Peabody Museum collection) clearly demonstrates that the style had a wide-ranging influence. Several sarapes collected in Guatemala in the late nineteenth century show the distinct Saltillo style with regional adaptations.

Probably many regional styles existed, but little accurate information on them has been found. Regional traits are probably identifiable through features such as the use of colors, materials, finish techniques, edges, joints, and specific designs. Southern pieces can be distinguished by the materials used and designs that seem to be derived from southern Indian styles.

In any case, the resulting Saltillo sarape is as distinctive a regional textile as exists anywhere in the world. It is as recognizable as the Persian rug, the Japanese kimono, the Victorian dress, the Scottish kilt, the Indian sari, or the Navajo blanket.

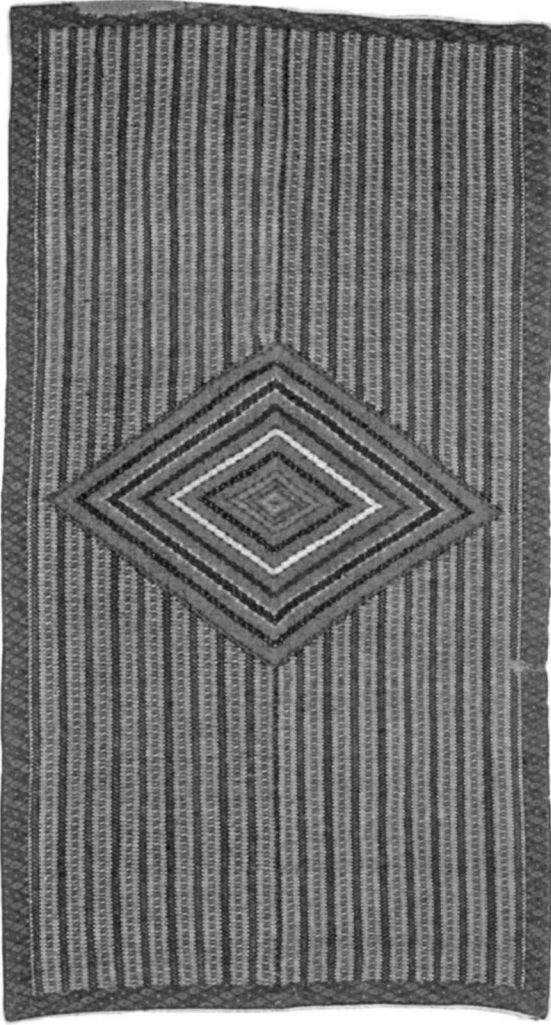


Fig. 10.1
Classic Saltillo sarape, ca. 1750–1825.
Mark and Lerin Winter Collection.

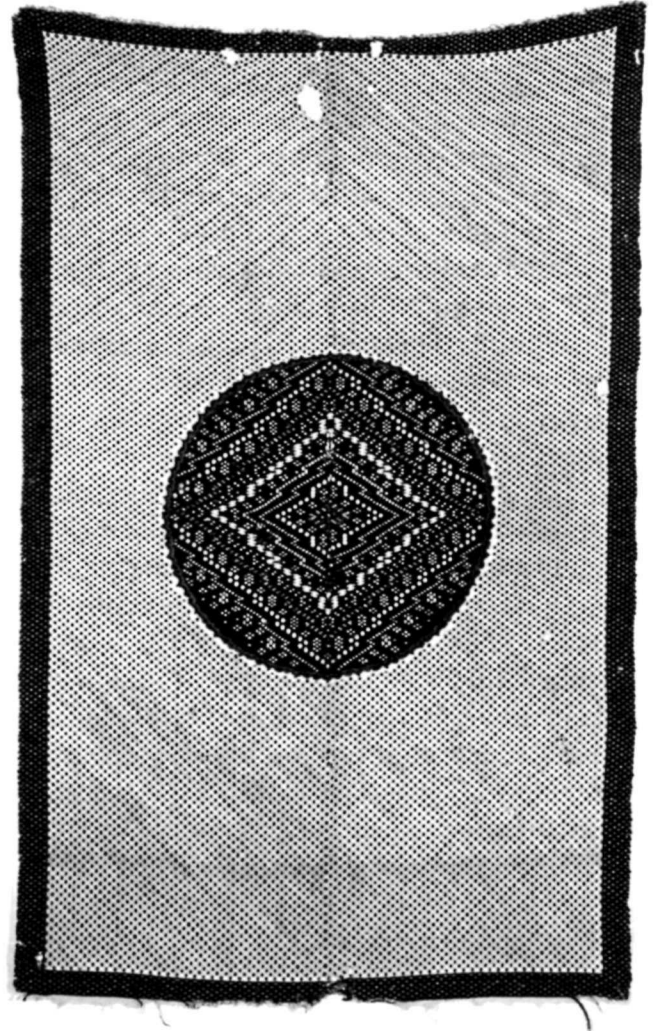


Fig. 10.2
Classic Saltillo sarape, ca. 1750–1825.
Mark and Lerin Winter Collection.

The Classic Period and Later Styles

The 1750–1860 time frame is the Classic period of the Saltillo sarape, but the postulated development period for this fine product would extend it even earlier. Sarapes in the Early Classic period (ca. 1750–1825) were an elite garment and were typically very finely woven, incorporating fine-scale patterning and strictly adherence to the design system.

The preference for hand-spinning cotton warp (foundation) threads twice as fine and then hand-plying them to create greater tensile strength is a precolumbian weaving trait and is evident in most Classic period Saltillo sarapes. This again shows the strict attention to detail and integrity that has helped so many fine examples survive intact to the present day.

The finely spun wool weft seen in all Classic examples takes the rich natural dyes well and employs all the properties of strength and practicality of this magic fiber.

Classic period Saltillos are very primary color-oriented, mostly reds and blues with yellow. Secondary colors of green and purple are used more sparingly, although some pieces have purple backgrounds. Natural white wool is seen in most examples of this period. We seldom see the use of natural or dyed brown and black, or orange.

Cochineal dye, discussed earlier, produces shades of red from pale pinks to deep purples. The profuse use of cochineal in Saltillo serapes indicates that they were a status symbol and represented wealth and prestige.

Purple could also be produced by mixing cochineal red with indigo blue. Indigo yielded the various rich blues, which were darkened by repetition of the dye process. A Saltillo sarape usually incorporates only one shade of blue unless it is one of the blue and white varieties, which can incorporate numerous shades of blue.

Yellow vegetal dyes were obtained from varied sources, including chamisa, sacatlascal, and palo morelete. They range from subdued and dull to brilliant and bright hues. Dyed yellow wool could be bathed in indigo to create various shades of green. Usually only one shade of green was used in an individual sarape.

Occasionally colors were combed or carded together to produce additional shades. One example was the blending of natural brown and white, resulting in combed gray.

The intricacy of design and colors of Classic period sarapes blends in very interesting ways when viewed from a distance. In fact, some sarapes are as distinguishable at a distance as they are up close. Perhaps use of specific colors or designs served to identify an individual or family or the artisan who wove the piece. Interestingly, certain color sarapes tend to blend into natural surroundings, having a camouflage quality.

Sarapes from the Late Classic period (1800–1860) tend to contain larger elements and variations from classic design systems. They seem to reflect the social climate of the period. The struggle for Mexican independence began in 1805 and culminated in 1821. The cultural and economic upheavals in Mexico were clearly influencing all aspects of life, including textiles and the increasingly popular sarape.

After Mexican Independence, we find numerous references to sarape values in travel journals and trade *guias*. When the Camino Real came to be known as the Chihuahua Trail in independent Mexico, Saltillo sarapes were still widely traded. They are frequently listed and classified according to quality and price.

According to Muehlenford in 1844, “The Sarape completes the outfit. The ordinary Sarapes are white and interwoven on the neckline and the seams with colorful wool. The better ones—‘Jorongos’—are woven double and are colorful throughout. The price changes depending on fineness and solidness of the weaving and beauty and diversity in color from 5 to 40 pesos.”

Chihuahua Trail trade *guias* from New Mexico classified some sarapes as *corriente* (common), valued from a few reals to one peso. Higher on the scale were the *sarapes labrado* (elaborate), *importante*, *extra finos*, and *atilmadas de gusto*. These carried values ranging from several to 40 or more pesos.

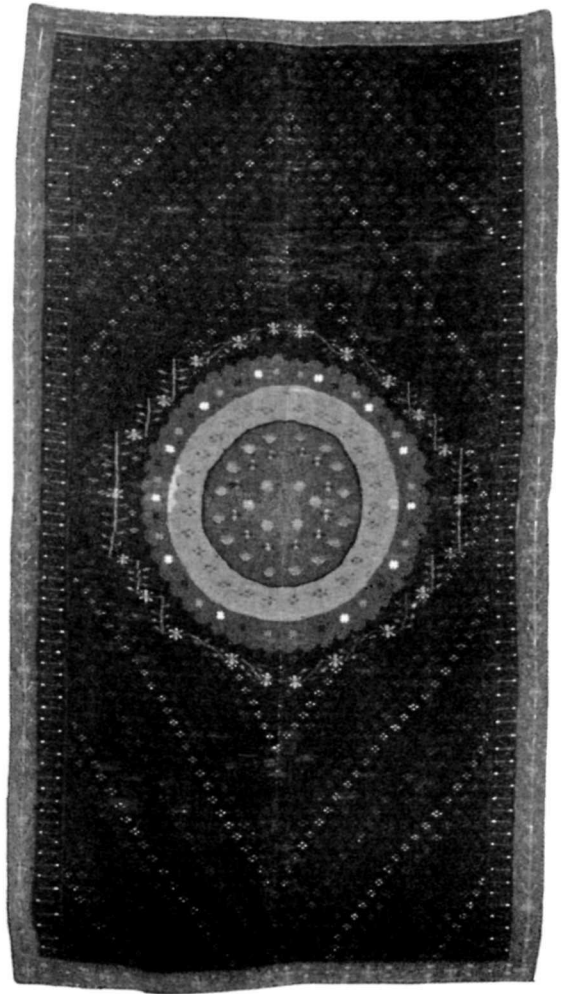


Fig. 10.3
Late Classic Saltillo sarape, ca. 1800–1860.
Durango Collection.

In a few instances the location of production was also identified for the finer sarapes, as illustrated in trader Juan Escole's 1839 *guia* mentioning a "Sarape San Migueleno." Wills from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries also have numerous references to sarapes with the corresponding place of origin and value.

Late Classic period sarapes were listed in manifests of trade with Europe, but interestingly, no references are found earlier than the 1830s and 1840s. Some authors, including E. Boyd, have alluded to the sarape as being a nineteenth-century garment because it is not mentioned in earlier records. However, I am confident that they date well back into the eighteenth century, if not earlier.

The popularized use of sarapes was frequently depicted in publications from the early nineteenth century. In Claudio Linati's book, *Costumes Civils, Militaires et Religieux du Mexique*, numerous sarapes were portrayed in lithographic plates. It was published in Brussels in 1828 after his stay in Mexico during 1820–1825. One plate shows a creole hacendado dressed in fancy riding attire, including his highly prized sarape or manga.

Reports from the Sanchez Navarro family's 1845 wool sales show that they were still the principal suppliers for the numerous artisans producing the brightly colored sarapes for which Saltillo was by then famous.

Considerable internal political turmoil was prevalent in Mexico during the Late Classic period of the Saltillo. Texas was relinquished to the United States in 1836 after the battle at San Jacinto. The captured General Santa Anna presented Sam Houston with a Saltillo sarape at San Jacinto (now in the National Museum of the American Indian). When the Mexican War of 1846–1848 ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hildago, Mexico lost the territory of present-day California, Arizona, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado, Utah, and Nevada to the United States. Several Saltillo sarapes were collected by U.S. military officers in Mexico in that era.

During these changing times in Mexico, the popularity of the Saltillo sarape continued to grow. Many more were produced, some of a lesser quality with simplified designs. Numerous new styles also emerged. While some were based on earlier themes, others introduced new design concepts. Sizes also varied, with smaller pieces becoming more common.

Copies of the expensive Saltillo sarapes were also produced in Europe and are first mentioned by Sir H. G. Ward in 1828: "Imitations of some of the best Mexican manufactures have been tried at Glasgow, and it has been found that the sarape, or party-colored woolen, which at Saltillo or Queretaro sells for eighteen, twenty or even twenty four dollars, might be made here, sent across the Atlantic and sold on the Table land, with freight, carriage and profit included for eight, or at most ten dollars."

Saltillo sarapes were also mentioned in California during the Mission period (1776–1840s). Some were perhaps even produced there. We do find mention of various degrees of weaving quality being done at missions. There may even be a California-style sarape not yet regionally identified.

In the first decades after independence, each successive Mexican government commonly disallowed the previous government's debts, infuriating foreign creditors. Finally, in the early 1860s, the French military under Napoleon III invaded Mexico with the support of the United States and several European countries. Although they were purportedly there to collect on debts, it soon became clear that Napoleon III had more ambitious plans. Most of the other countries withdrew their support while Napoleon III continued his scheme to take over Mexico.

Mexican President Benito Juarez presented a Saltillo sarape to General Porfirio Diaz for his victory over French troops at Puebla on May 5, 1862. Although that hard-won victory was temporary, Cinco de Mayo is still celebrated in Mexico today.

By 1863, the French forces had gained control of at least Central Mexico. In 1864, Napoleon III sent Archduke Maximilian (brother of the Austrian king) and his wife Carlotta to fill the presumed Mexican "need" for a ruling monarch.

The best sarape weavers went to work for the new elite and altered their designs to cater to northern European tastes. In the Maximilian period (ca. 1860–1875), the traditional layout was followed, but weavers incorporated floral motifs and new colors and yarns. The weavers showed an ability to adapt quickly to new influences and changing tastes.

Around the mid-nineteenth century, we begin to see plied yarns and synthetic dyes being utilized in the Saltillo sarape. This date corresponds with the northern European influence in Mexico as well as the introduction of mechanical equipment for plying yarn and the development of synthetic dyes in Europe.

During the Maximilian period for the first time threads of silk, gold, and silver were used in sarapes. Silk was usually a plied embroidery thread, probably of Oriental or European manufacture. Gold and silver threads were made by wrapping a thin layer of the metal around a cotton or linen core. These were initially also of Old World manufacture and had been used for centuries in Europe for decoration. Prior to 1860 in the New World, agave cactus fiber cores were wrapped in silver or gold and these threads were used to decorate saddles, sombreros, or ecclesiastical garments.

Among Maximilian's passions was a love of the horse culture of Mexico and its attire, including the by-then-famous Saltillo sarape. A silk sarape is known that was supposedly woven specifically for Maximilian. His popularization of the attire made the sarape more of an urban garment, usually smaller and more shawl-like. Long macramé fringes were commonly seen on this type of sarape. Older sarapes were often modified by the addition of macraméed, fringed sleeves to "modernize" them. The poncho slit was often sewn shut or never woven in, as many pieces were then being made in one piece (rather than the traditional two pieces) because of innovations in looms.



Fig. 10.4
Maximilian period sarape, ca. 1865.
Mark and Lerin Winter Collection.

Examples of sarape imitations supposedly printed in Germany or Austria under the direction of Emperor Maximilian still survive. This clearly indicates the widespread popularity of the Saltillo during the Maximilian period. As indicated, many of these printed woolens were marketed back into Mexico.

After the Civil War, the United States invoked the Monroe Doctrine prohibiting European interference on any American soil. Fearing a full-scale war with the United States, the French pulled out of Mexico, leaving Maximilian a king without an army. He remained in Mexico and was overthrown by Mexican patriots in 1867. Maximilian was executed at the Hill of Bells outside Queretaro along with his two remaining generals, Mirrian and Mejon.

Post-Maximilian period sarapes (1875–1895) show the design influence of the preceding period, but simplification and commercialization were increasingly prevalent. The popularity of the sarape continued to grow as it became a symbol of independent Mexico.

By 1900 many regional styles of sarapes developed whose influence can still be seen today. They became an important tourist trade item throughout Mexico. The horse culture group known as the charros still demand fine-quality sarapes along with other items of equestrian apparel that have their roots in earlier traditions.

The Saltillo sarape remains a symbol of Mexico and its blending of two distinct cultures. Although records are scarce, the Camino Real certainly carried the Saltillo sarape both in word and example along its far-reaching extent. ♣



Fig. 10.5
Mexican sarape, early 20th century.
New World Arts Collection.

East Meets West on the Camino Real

Chinese Export Porcelain in Nueva Vizcaya and Nuevo Mexico

David V. Hill and John A. Peterson



CHINESE PORCELAIN HAS BEEN AN AESTHETIC as well as utilitarian pottery for more than 2,000 years. Even though Nuevo Mexico was on the remote edge of the far-flung Spanish empire, citizens of the province participated in trade with China that was facilitated by the Manila galleon. In the fourteenth century the Jingdezhen kilns, located in northern Jiangxi Province, began to produce porcelain decorated in underglaze blue. This porcelain, often called blue-on-white, was made by painting in cobalt oxide under a nearly colorless glaze. Underglaze blue was widely imitated throughout the Islamic world and prepared the Spanish for China's own use of "Muhammedan blue" (Mudge 1962).

With the advent of the Qing Dynasty in the late seventeenth century, the Ming styles became entrenched as classical form, appealing to the Manchu immigrants who sought validation of their "Chinese-ness" through imitation of the Ming period (Spence 1990). Ming styles were reproduced en masse, both at Jingdezhen as well as much later at emerging coastal cities such as Fuzhou on the China Sea, which supplied a growing export trade via Manila as early as the eighteenth century. Trade routes by galleon to Manila and thence to Acapulco, and overland to Atlantic ports, purveyed Chinese porcelain to an admiring market in both the New and Old Worlds. Some of this porcelain traveled north from Acapulco into the frontier of northern New Spain.

The introduction of porcelain paralleled the importation of majolica from the Mediterranean, which was itself devised as an earthenware imitation of the luster and fineness of Chinese porcelain. Mudéjar combined decorative motifs found on both Chinese and Islamic pottery and thereby entered the New World from two separate directions and different historical trajectories.

The exotic character of majolica and Chinese porcelain in northern New Spain must have reinforced its luxury status, despite what appears to have been considerable export trade with China. Vessels were stored on shipboard to catch rainwater for water supply en route from Manila to Acapulco. These vessels were then packed in bolts of silk for the mule train journey north. Store inventories, estate papers, and the chance occasional discovery of porcelain sherds at archaeological sites in the region attest to the persistence of porcelain importation into the region.

Porcelain was transported from the port of Acapulco over two routes, depending on the ultimate

destination of the pieces. Porcelain bound for trade in the interior of Mexico, Nueva Vizcaya, and Nuevo Mexico was transported to Mexico City. Those pieces bound for Spain traveled through Puebla en route to Veracruz, the port of embarkation for Seville.

Chinese porcelain had a strong influence on the potters of Puebla, who had a long pre-Spanish history of pottery production. In 1745, Father Juan Villa Sanchez wrote of Puebla pottery:

The pottery, of which great quantities are made in Puebla, is similar to the glass-ware, being so fine and beautiful that it equals or excels that of Talavera, or of Cartegena of the Indies, the ambition of the Puebla potters being to emulate and equal the beauty of the wares of China (Barber 1908).

CERAMICS ON THE FRONTIER

Ceramics used in homes in colonial New Mexico were derived from two sources: local native production and transport along the Camino Real. The two principal types of ceramics brought from Mexico were *loza de Puebla*, or majolica, and Chinese porcelain. Chinese porcelain, all of which originated at the manufactory in Jingdezhen, was considered a luxury import in colonial New Mexican households. Majolica listed in 42 will and estate inventories was valued at an average of 3 reals and 5 granos apiece. In contrast, Chinese porcelain was valued in the same documents at an average of 2 pesos, 1 real each (D. Snow 1993).

Chinese porcelain was present at San Gabriel del Yunge Oweenge, the first European settlement in New Mexico, founded by Juan de Oñate in 1598. San Gabriel continued to be occupied until around 1617, after the capital had been moved to Santa Fe (Simmons 1987). Three sherds were recovered during



Fig. 11.1

*La Villa of San Gabriel. From San Gabriel del Yungue, Ellis.
Courtesy Sunstone Press, Box 2321, Santa Fe, NM 87504.*

the limited excavation of this Spanish settlement, two with blue-on-white decoration and one with orange-on-white (Ellis 1987). These vessels no doubt belonged to Spanish colonists who brought them from Mexico as personal household items and as statements of their status.

From the beginning of the seventeenth century Chinese porcelains were imported into New Mexico in substantial amounts. While porcelain is not specifically mentioned in mission inventories, missions received pieces either as offerings from the Spanish parishioners or as clerics' personal items. Chinese porcelain has been recovered at several of the Salinas pueblos, including Abó and Quarai (Hurt 1990; Toulouse 1949). Chinese porcelain has also been reported from domestic contexts at Las Humanas (Gran Quivera National Monument) and Tabira (Hayes et al. 1981; Wilson et al. 1983). Blue-and-white porcelain sherds were also recovered from seventeenth century contexts at Franciscan Awatovi (Montgomery et al. 1949).

The Salinas area also presents us with limited evidence of a Chinese presence in seventeenth-century New Mexico. In a letter to the Tribunal of the Inquisition dated January 19, 1667, fray Juan Bernal mentions two children, Francisco Garcia Nieto and Juan Nieto, as being *zambiangos* (an admixture of American Indian and Chinese; Hackett 1937:272). These children apparently lived in or near Quarai with their father, Joseph Nieto, and his wife, Luc a Lopez de Garcia. Whether the two Nieto children were adopted or the children of an earlier marriage, or Luc a Lopez de Garcia was Chinese, is not mentioned in the records.

Chinese porcelain has also been reported closer to the Camino Real. Paraje de San Diego, a campsite along the Camino Real located south of present-day Rincon, New Mexico, produced two sherds of Chinese porcelain, apparently from the same plate (Fournier, this volume). The two sherds have light and dark green and brown pigments, and the design on one of the sherds exhibits part of a tree.

Three sherds of blue-on-white porcelain were reported from a seventeenth-century structure at the Comanche Springs site east of the town of Tomé that may have housed a sala or chapel. The Rio Grande Glaze E ceramics from this structure indicate an early seventeenth century date of occupation. The abundance of European artifacts, domesticated animal remains, and nonaboriginal features within the structure, such as a raised altar, indicate that this structure was constructed by and for Spanish colonists (Hibben et al. 1985).

Chinese porcelain has also been reported from seventeenth-century sites in the Santa Fe area. A single blue-on-white sherd was recovered from the Signal site (LA 9142) located near Galisteo Dam. This site consists of a rectangular three-room structure, corral area, and trash scatter. This site is thought by the excavator to represent a Spanish household of the pre-Pueblo Revolt settlement of Los Cerrillos (Alexander 1971). A more extensive late seventeenth century site (LA 20000, located near La Cienega), consisting of several structures and corrals, also produced several pieces of porcelain (Cordelia Snow, personal communication 1997). A sherd of porcelain was reported from LA 146 in the Santa Fe Valley, apparently from a surface context (Goggin 1968).

Given the sumptuary nature of Chinese porcelain in colonial New Mexico, the recovery of several pieces during excavations conducted at the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe is not surprising. Several pieces of underglaze blue have been recovered (Shulsky 1994; C. Snow 1993). Given the long period of use of the palace, the porcelain sherds could have derived from either seventeenth- or eighteenth-century contexts.



Fig. 11.2
Two sherds of Chinese blue-on-white porcelain excavated from Quarai. The poor quality of the decorative cobalt glaze and the bubble in the center indicate that fairly low quality porcelains were being sent to colonial New Mexico during the 17th century.



Fig. 11.3
Tiles, ca. 1650–1700,
Puebla, Mexico. Photos
Jack Parsons. Spanish
Colonial Arts Society
Collection. Courtesy
Museum of New Mexico
Press, Santa Fe
(accession #L.5.62-44-45)



Fig. 11.4
Bowl (top) and plate
(bottom), 18th–19th
century China. Photos
Jack Parsons. Spanish
Colonial Arts Society
Collection. Courtesy
Museum of New Mexico
Press, Santa Fe.

An early eighteenth century site in El Paso produced three sherds of blue-on-white porcelain. This site, which appears to have been some sort of hut, also contained sherds of Mexican majolica and ceramics from the local plainware tradition (Miller and O'Leary 1992).

A possible example of a porcelain plate was recovered from Three Corn Ruin (LA 1871), a Navajo site which consists of a small pueblito and two forked-stick hogans. Tree-ring dates indicate that this location was constructed during first half of the eighteenth century (Powers and Johnson 1987). The piece is described as having a painted underglaze, cobalt blue outlines and areas, and brick red outlines and filled-in areas. The overglaze painting consists of green leaves, purplish rose flowers, yellow outlines of panels, medallion, and leaf stems; also fine black lines on green leaves and fine gold lines in large pendent leaves with fleur-de-lis terminals. The pale watery red wash on the latter leaves is fugitive (Hester 1962). A photo of this plate was examined by Peng Shi Fan, state archaeologist for Jiangxi Province, in 1993. He did not recognize the design and does not believe the piece is Chinese. This artifact, now housed at the University of Colorado Museum, needs to be reexamined to determine its origin. If the plate is a piece of export porcelain, then it is the only porcelain artifact to have come from a native context that was not directly related to Spanish occupation of the location.

Porcelain has been recovered from the twelve presidios established in 1775 by Hugo O'Connor. These presidios served a number of purposes, including protecting the Camino Real from Apache raiders and halting French territorial advances in east Texas. The porcelain fragments from these presidios were recovered from surface contexts and may represent later trash deposits since most of the presidios are near modern settlements (Gerald 1968).

From the 1790 inventory of the store of Manuel de Urquidi at San José del Parral are listed, among other items: cuatro y media docenas de medias negras, de China, para hombre; siete y media docenas de medias de China, carmes, para idem; siete piezas de lanquin de China, fino; 11 varas de ruán de China; 3/4 varas de coleta fino, de China; cinco piezas de bombastos, de China; dos piezas de coletas de China; anteadas, maltratadas; una docena de tazas ordinarias, de China; 302 docenas de posuelos ordinarios, de China (Curiel 1991).

EAST MEETS WEST

Chinese porcelain continued to be imported throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries until the trade with Nuevo Mexico declined in favor of the gold and silver mines and mining towns in central and southern Chihuahua. But by the late nineteenth century a new and different vector for porcelain export emerged. Chinese laborers working railroad construction as well as others immigrating to Mexico brought porcelain into the American Southwest and northern Mexico from the Pacific Coast (Fahey 1997). What had begun as a south-north flow of goods from the mercantile world was transformed into a west-east linkage with the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States. By 1881, when the railroad connected El Paso and Ciudad Juárez with nineteenth-century America, an onslaught of cheap utility whitewares and bottles flooded

local markets. Blue willow patterns on transferware and decal ware joined majolica as the latest imitation of Chinese porcelain to find a niche on the frontier.

Design styles and vessel forms were remarkably similar to those of the late seventeenth century, some 200 years earlier. Ming forms transformed by the Qing continued to validate Chinese-ness, especially for foreign perceptions of Chinese porcelain. The export trade flourished by providing Chinese motifs adapted to commemorate European traditions and heraldry (Mudge 1986). Despite the continuity of styles, the function of porcelain traded to the American Southwest and northern Chihuahua had changed dramatically from being markers of wealth and luxury to utilitarian consumption. The Spanish gentry imported porcelain as a signifier of the exotic and the international; the Chinese immigrants used porcelain as a part of their daily expression of being Chinese in a foreign land. ♣

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Ceramic Production and Trade on the Camino Real

Patricia Fournier



IN THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD (1521–1620), the indigenous ceramic traditions received influences from western Europe and later from the Far East; trade was dominated and controlled by Spain. New Spain became the crossroad of all commercial transactions between Spain and China from 1575 until 1821. Chinese porcelains and stonewares, Iberian glazed wares and majolicas, as well as French and Italian majolicas influenced local production. The Spaniards enriched New World ceramics with the contribution of techniques such as the potter's wheel and glazing as a surface treatment, introducing new forms and designs fit to the colonists' tastes and needs.

During the colonial period (1521–1821), the consumption of burnished and coarse earthenwares, derived from precontact traditions, as well as glazed ceramics introduced by the Europeans, was generalized. Their use was basically domestic, for the preparation or storage of foods, although table service wares were also manufactured. During the sixteenth century, European copper and iron containers were scarce and expensive in New Spain, and Indian ceramics were initially used by the conquerors and their descendants.

From sites in the Caribbean (Deagan 1987) and at the earliest Spanish settlements on the Gulf Coast of Mexico, like Villa Rica and Antigua Veracruz, European lead-glazed and plain-surface ceramics have been recovered in archaeological excavations. In Central Mexican sites, however, these wares were made locally, strongly based on indigenous ceramic traditions (Charlton and Fournier 1993). Often when the Spaniards encountered societies with well-established ceramic technologies, the precolumbian traditions survived, and many Indian potters learned to manufacture glazed ceramics. This is the case for the Basin of Mexico, the Valley of Puebla, the Valley of Oaxaca, and areas of western Mexico (particularly Jalisco and Michoacán).

In New Spain, orange, red, or bichrome/polychrome burnished ceramics as well as plain-surface ceramics are mainly derived from prehispanic traditions; these wares as well as glazed ceramics integrate both European and indigenous vessel forms. Tin-enamelled earthenwares or majolicas are characterized exclusively by European-derived forms—many of them inherited from the Arabs—employed to store and serve foods, for personal hygiene, decoration, and illumination.

At market stands, inns, and bars operating before the conquest, as well as in the hostelryes and

taverns established by the Europeans, ceramic vessels with burnished, plain, or lead-glazed surfaces were employed for the transportation, storage, preparation, and service of solid foods and all classes of liquids.

In prehispanic Mexico, slaves performed most of the domestic chores, as well as people who were paying tribute with their labor, both men and women. During the early colonial period, women working for the Spanish settlers perpetuated prehispanic practices, including food preparation (Rojas 1992:207), employing vessels with which they were familiar. The ceramic vessels included forms used to cook meals like ollas or pots, basins or *cazuelas*, grinding vessels or *molcajetes*, and tortilla griddles or *comales*.

In the Basin of Mexico, people transported water in jars with three horizontal or vertical handles, or pitchers with a vertical handle, all made from plain-surface ceramics. In the houses, water was usually stored in large ollas with a capacity of up to 40 liters (Martínez et al. 1995).

Since the climate was mild during the winter, braziers for heating were not required. However, these ceramic vessels were widely employed as portable stoves for heating tortilla griddles, pots, and basins to cook all sorts of foods. Candlesticks were indispensable, made of either metal or ceramics. Silver vessels as well as ceramic or wood vessels were used to serve meals and drinks. For personal hygiene, bathtubs, chamber pots, basins, and jars were used (e.g., Gómez de Orozco 1983:27–37), while for decorative purposes there were flower pots and flower vases.

Based on the documentary and archaeological records, ceramic artifacts were indispensable in all classes of daily activities and their consumption was widespread; vessels were sold in the markets, and the manufacture of coarse earthenwares, including lead-glazed, probably began only a few years after the Spanish conquest. The potters were both Indians and Spaniards (Lister and Lister 1982; Martínez et al. 1995).

With the manufacture of lead-glazed ceramics in New Spain, people had access to vessels with relatively impermeable walls that were easy to wash. Although before the contact period in the Basin of Mexico plain-surface ceramics were manufactured primarily for ritual use, during the early colonial period different classes of plain-surface vessels were produced for use in domestic activities. Thus, in colonial Central Mexico, inexpensive plain-surface ceramics were widely employed, mainly with vessel forms designed to keep liquids cool, just as they are used nowadays (Martínez et al. 1995).

In contemporary Mexico, Indian and mestizo potters still manufacture lead-glazed and plain-surface ceramics, although this traditional industry is disappearing because of the introduction of plastic, metal, and glass containers (Edson 1979; Fournier 1995; Hopkins 1991).

The manufacturing techniques evident for plain-surface ceramics include the use of horizontal molds, since there are abundant marks or seams where molded sections were joined together. Hand-modeling and coiling were also used. These techniques are prehispanic, although there are a few forms of European origin. Either none is wheel-made, or the prints of the wheel were erased. Lead-glazed ceramics were also made with horizontal molds. Tubs were made by coiling. The potter's wheel was also employed for lead-glazed wares. Forms introduced by the Europeans are the bulk of wheel-made vessels (Martínez et al. 1995).

Lead-glazed ceramics exhibit internal glaze, and the exterior is only covered a few centimeters below the rim, except for vessels like dishes. Plain-surface ceramics are characterized by a reddish slip, except for bases and the interior of jars and pitchers.

Most of the pots were not decorated, but a wide diversity of decorative techniques occurs on the few decorated examples, especially on the body and occasionally on the lip or handles. In Central Mexican archaeological collections, the most common decorative techniques in both wares are grooving, notching, appliqué, fingernail impression, stamping, and incising. Lead-glazed painted

vessels usually have only blotches, occasionally geometric or naturalistic patterns (flowers and leaves), and several combined techniques. Fiber marks, perforations and shell-inlaid examples appear exclusively in plain-surface ceramics (Martínez et al. 1995).

Majolica, also known as *maiolica* or *mayólica*, is an earthenware with a vitreous, opaque enamel surface made with tin and lead oxide. Vessels of this ware, as well as lead-glazed ceramics, are fired twice. The first firing process or bisque firing is carried out to produce the earthenware body. With the second firing process, the stanniferous enamel or glaze as well as the mineral oxides used to decorate the vessels are vitrified (Fournier 1990). Most majolica vessels are wheel-thrown, except for large vessels, figurines, and tiles, which are made with molds.

Various decorative influences are evident in the majolicas produced in New Spain. There are three main sources of inspiration (Fournier and Charlton 1993):

- Moorish influence, which is particularly strong in Mexico City majolicas from the early and middle colonial periods in blue-on-white or cream designs, and occasionally in the green series. One design which is particularly prevalent in collections recovered in Mexico City is the *alafia* design, fairly common in Santo Domingo Blue on White; this Spanish import is common in New World ceramic collections from the late fifteenth century to the 1620s (Marken 1994:224–230). *Alafias* are parallel diagonal lines, present on everted rims, with dots and dashes (Skowronek et al. 1988). Several Morisco design elements are present on the majolicas possibly manufactured in Mexico City: center patterns with palmettes, broad sweeping lines, or rays in the background; rims with alternating hachure placed between one or two frame lines (Lister and Lister 1982, 1987), and wavy rays.
- Design elements from Italy: fine-lined rim scrolls derived from the Gothic-Floral style; chromatic combinations—like those exhibited by Fig Springs Polychrome—possibly come from Italian prototypes (Lister and Lister 1982). Furthermore, human figures probably from Faenza Compediario are integrated into middle colonial Puebla majolica types like Abó and Aranama Polychrome.
- Chinese influence, which occurs in both early and late majolica designs, although it is strongest in the later majolicas of New Spain. Panels with flowers and Buddhist/Taoist emblems might be direct Late Ming and Early T'ing (Wan Li and K'ang Hsi periods) influence; these design elements, as well as encircling lines, overlapping arcades, or vertical panels on exteriors, appear on San Luis Blue on White and Puebla Blue on White vessels (Fournier and Charlton 1993). Puebla Blue on White plates and rim patterns also exhibit free interpretations of Chinese Blue on White Ming design elements (some common in Kraak porcelains), like the lotus panel, concentric waves, scrolls, lotus flowers and sprays, artemisa leaves, waterweeds, peony scrolls and diamond diaper borders (characterized by a band of elliptical forms at right angles to each other; Macintosh 1977).

Although the early and middle colonial period majolicas probably made in Mexico City integrate Moorish, Spanish, Italianate, and Chinese elements, the types exhibit designs which led to the development of the Puebla tradition baroque style, with petals scrolling and covering wide areas in vessels (evidencing the aversion to empty areas and spaces which characterizes the baroque style in general) (Fournier and Charlton 1993).

Majolica vessels from Spain and New Spain exhibit a few similarities and many differences. Spanish Morisco ware forms, particularly large plates with obverse ridging (Lister and Lister 1982), appear in the early colonial period majolica form repertoire from Mexico City, but with thinner walls than the Spanish prototypes. Both Spanish and New World bowls have everted, rolled rims.

Spanish sixteenth-century types mainly consist of large, thick-walled vessels. Although sixteenth-

century Spanish majolica includes fine-grade types, believed to be inspired by Italian formal and technological traditions (Lister and Lister 1982), most of the Spanish vessels found in the New World are large, heavy containers (mainly serving bowls/plates, and a few storage vessels like medicine jars). The predominance of this form probably reflects specific functions and dietary habits: “fabada/paella style” meals, complex broth-based recipes served in large *escudillas* (serving bowls), cups/bowls, or plates. Thick walls keep food warm longer, an important advantage for traditional Spanish recipes cooked with abundant olive oil or animal fat (Fournier and Charlton 1993).

The Italian form repertoire consists of smaller vessels with very thin walls, possibly used for different food than those from Spain. In the New World, the Spanish and *criollo* settlers adopted and incorporated into their diet Indian meals and recipes, seldom prepared with large amounts of fats (e.g., hot chocolate, *atole*, *mole*, tacos, roasted meats or meat broth, boiled vegetables, and cacti), which might be reflected in the Mexican majolica form repertoire.

The Chinese porcelain form repertoire may also have influenced New World traditions, fusing with the Italianate influence. Although some late Ming (Wan Li period) vessels (particularly Provincial porcelains and some Kraak porcelains) are large and thick-walled (Fournier 1990), in general we are dealing with fine and thin-walled serving bowls/plates. The functions of these vessels changed from those of the original Chinese consumers; for example, rice bowls were employed for serving hot chocolate, and storage containers (*mei ping* and *kuan* vases) became luxury ornaments. Some Chinese porcelain and stoneware forms, like the vases, are integrated into the middle and late colonial form repertoire, especially in the Puebla tradition. Chinese serving vessels dating to the Wan Li period may have been a source of inspiration for potters from 1575 on.

During the colonial and subsequent periods, the circulation of exotic goods benefited only a small percentage of the population in Mexico, those who formed the dominant class. Indians, mestizos, and *castas* (of “mixed blood”) had little economic power, and they depended on the crops and crafts they produced for their survival and domestic needs, including ceramic vessels.

In New Spain and Republican Mexico, the elements of material culture that appear in the archaeological context mark socioethnic differences and the economic status of the consumers. European majolicas as well as those made in New Spain, and decorated or undecorated Chinese or French porcelains, as well as whitewares, are fairly abundant wherever the Hispanic population settled. The variable costs of these ceramics reflect the social and economic diversity of the upper and middle classes from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth centuries (Charlton and Fournier 1993; Fournier 1990).

Comparing prices for the aforementioned wares provides the basis for inferring that some of them might have been status and socioethnic markers during the late colonial and early republican periods. I have studied 75 probate inventories and 5 store inventories from northern Mexico, that is to say from Chihuahua and Sonora (Archivo Municipal de Hidalgo del Parral, Causas Civiles; Archivo General de la Nación, Consulado, vol. 228 y 120, exp. 2). These documents date from 1705 to 1820. Vessel forms include dishes, cups, and bowls for table service; storage vessels and pots for solids; and jars and pitchers to serve and store liquids. Prices fluctuate according to ware grade and quality, as well as by the decorative attributes present.

Chinese porcelain vessels and European whitewares, listed in the documents as “flint-ware” (although they are not stoneware vessels), have approximately the same price. Majolicas made in Puebla have a lower price than Chinese porcelains. Tonalá burnished ceramics, made in Jalisco, are cheaper than Mexican majolicas. Lead-glazed and coarse Indian ceramics have the lowest cost.

Import-export records dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries show similar price tendencies (Lerdo de Tejada 1967). Spanish majolica is two to three times more expensive than

Mexican majolica. Chinese porcelain is approximately ten times more expensive than Mexican majolica, and European porcelain costs 3.5 to 9 times more than Mexican majolica.

These trends prevailed since the early colonial period. For New Mexico, Snow's 1986 study of probate inventories (mainly from 1701 to 1839) shows similar price differences for majolicas, Oriental porcelains, and earthenwares (Pueblo or Mexican lead-glazed).

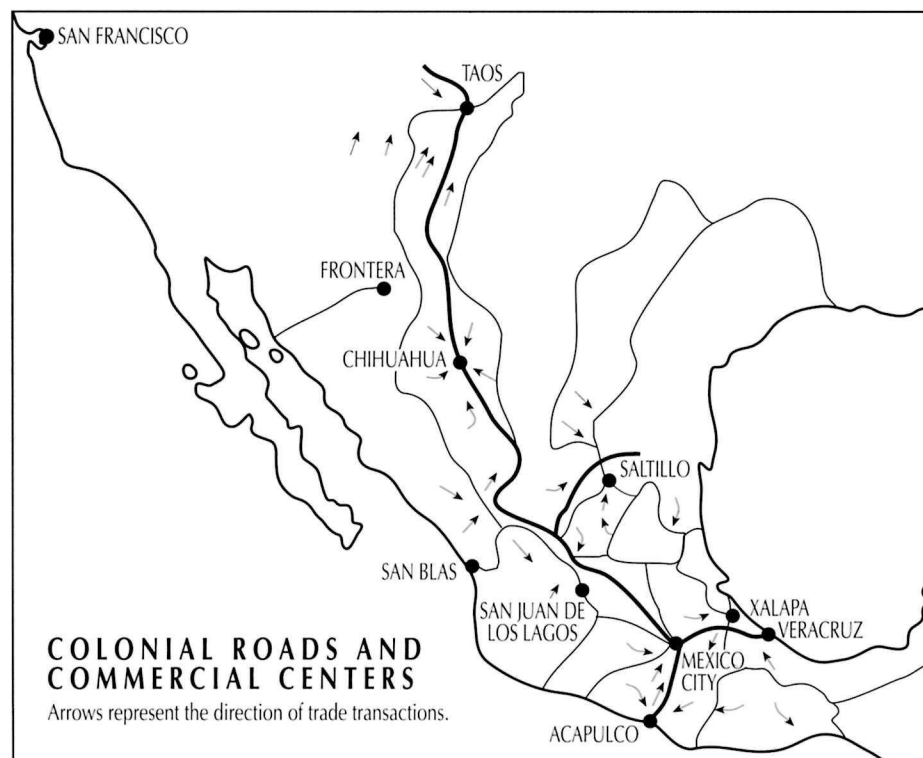
The urban versus suburban and rural phenomenon, associated with socioethnic divisions, is reflected in the archaeological record. Archaeological deposits in Mexico City, both in the Templo Mayor and the Convent of San Jerónimo, show a high frequency of European and Mexican majolicas, Chinese and French porcelains, and British creamware, pearlware, and whiteware. These urban deposits are the result of activities carried out mostly by the Hispanic population, forming part of the upper and middle classes. In contrast, in Tlatelolco (also located in the Basin of Mexico), inexpensive wares prevail until the 1870s. Imported ceramics and Mexican majolicas constitute a small percentage of the collections.

For northern New Spain, peripheral and rural, only at sites like presidios and *reales de mina* (mining towns) are expensive wares found in relatively high frequencies. In comparison, missions show an impoverished material record; Indian wares are fairly abundant in the collections (Barnes 1983; Fournier and Fournier 1989). This is also the case in rural areas of Central Mexico (Charlton and Fournier 1993).

CERAMIC PRODUCTION IN MEXICO DURING THE COLONIAL AND REPUBLICAN PERIODS

Pottery production is seldom mentioned in documents from the colonial and republican periods. Only partial censuses are available, particularly for the 1700s. The kinds of wares potters manufactured are usually not specified, but sometimes the producers are classified. Thus, *olleros* coiled or hand-made their pots, *alfareros* produced glazed ceramics, and *loceros* made majolica (McMillen 1983:3–4).

Fig. 12.1
Colonial roads and
commercial centers
(adapted from Carrera
Stampa 1959:233).



The following section describes pottery production in colonial and republican Mexico, based on historical references. No information is available in most cases about the distribution and consumption centers of ceramics manufactured in different towns or regions.

The Basin of Mexico

In the early colonial period, the main Indian pottery-making communities in the Basin of Mexico were Huitzilopochco (Churubusco), Azcapotzalco, Xochimilco, and Cuauhtitlán. Cuauhtitlán was the most important for the production of ordinary earthenware (*loza ordinaria*), jars (*cántaros*), different kinds of pots (*barros*), ollas, and “special red mugs” (*jarros colorados llamados de Cuauhtitlán muy particulares*) during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Gibson 1980:360). In 1566, the pitchers (*jarros*) and mugs (*vasos* or *alcarrazas*) employed for the celebration of the birth of Martín Cortés’ twins were made in Cuauhtitlán (Suárez de Peralta 1990:185). In 1780, the Jesuit Francisco Javier Clavijero (1987:259) recorded that the potters from Cuauhtitlán were famous. Cuauhtitlán had factories where coarse earthenware was manufactured in 1784 (Florescano and Gil Sánchez 1973). In 1791, a black potter (of African descent) worked in Cuauhtitlán (McMillen 1983:256).

In 1537 and 1538 there were two *olleros* in Mexico City, and in the mid-sixteenth century Indian potters were making efforts to learn Spanish ceramic methods (Lister and Lister 1982:88, 98).

In 1777, Juan de Viera (1990:258) noted that glazed ceramics, mainly cooking pots, were produced by the Indians from San Christóbal de Romita (today a district of Mexico City).

In Mexico City in 1753 and 1793 several potters were listed on the censuses; some were Indian potters who lived in San Juan (McMillen 1983:165–166). In the eighteenth century, the potters of Mexico City lived in the northwestern zone of the city, an area they had possibly occupied since the early colonial period (Lister and Lister 1982:90).

In 1786 in Texcoco (today located in the state of Mexico) there was only one Spanish-American potter (McMillen 1983:169).

Documentary evidence of master potters apparently producing majolica in Mexico City dates from 1696; in 1771, a potter passed the exam as a *locero de lo blanco*, that is, a maker of white earthenware or majolica (Toussaint 1974:200). There is also a document from 1775 about majolica production in Mexico City (Hoffmann 1922:628).

Puebla

The guild regulations written in 1653 in Puebla mention the manufacture of red earthenware (*loza colorada*), probably lead-glazed and produced at the Barrio de la Luz; by 1689, a workshop for glazed ceramics was founded at this barrio (Ulloa 1995:48). In 1797 black-on-orange lead-glazed pottery was manufactured in the city of Puebla, and probably the same kind of pottery had been produced by Indians at least since 1683 (Kaplan 1980:22, 32).

In the late colonial period, ceramics were produced in the Puebla region in Tepeaca, Villa de Carreón (Valley of Atlixco), and Tulancingo, where 37 potters lived, eight of them registered as *olleros* (McMillen 1983:163–164).

At least from 1573, majolica was manufactured in the city of Puebla; during the first half of the seventeenth century, several “white pottery workshops” were established; they sold their products to various cities of New Spain. From the mid-seventeenth century, Puebla was an important nucleus for distributing pottery even beyond the limits of the colony; the trade in majolica reached practically every corner of New Spain, through the most important commercial routes (Castro 1989:33, 38; Cervantes 1939). Puebla had 46 majolica workshops in 1693. In 1774, among the principal business

activities was the production of earthenware. There were more than 40 commercial houses in 1793, and in 1794, Puebla had 14 factories where “yellow earthenware” (*loza amarilla*, probably common grade majolica) and fine pottery (fine grade majolica) were produced; by 1802, only 16 factories had survived, marking the collapse of the majolica industry in that city, although there was a revival in the 1920s (Castro 1989:40; Cervantes 1939; Florescano and Gil 1973:43; Humboldt 1978:454; O’Crouley 1972:33).

The Gulf Coast

Eleven potters resided in Orizaba in 1786. In the same year, 34 potters were registered in Jalapa, Veracruz (McMillen 1983:169, 170); some of them probably made majolica.

The Great Chichimeca and the Mining Towns

The Querétaro Region. In 1791, Querétaro had only four potters, one *ollero* and three *alfareros*. In 1717, Amealco became a pottery-making center where enameled wares were manufactured (McMillen 1983:176–177).

The Guanajuato Region. Reciting oral history and the limited documentary evidence, some scholars have proposed that the priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla—the father of Mexican independence—introduced the art of tin-glazed pottery in Guanajuato between 1803 and 1810. In fact, Hidalgo did organize a majolica workshop in Dolores. Nevertheless, long before Hidalgo’s efforts, in 1791 three potters had located in the city of Guanajuato, probably dedicated to majolica production (Cortina 1986:2–3; McMillen 1983:176). This city became one of the most important centers for majolica production during the nineteenth century.

San Luisito was a settlement of potters on the outskirts of Guanajuato city; lead-glazed ceramics and majolica were produced there until the 1930s. In Coroneo, black-on-orange lead-glazed pottery is made, and possibly the town has specialized in pottery production since the mid-eighteenth century along with San Felipe Torres Mochas, Dolores Hidalgo, and San Luis de la Paz. Dolores Hidalgo potters were producing coarse earthenware in 1909, and a few family workshops still survive (Castañeda et al. in press; Cortina 1986:2; Dollero 1989:184; Hopkins 1991:105–106; Villegas 1964).

Located in Acámbaro in 1792 was the house of two Spanish potters (*alfareros*) (Archivo General de la Nación, *Padrones*, vol. 23). Celaya had 14 potters (*alfareros* and *olleros*) at the end of the colonial period (McMillen 1983:176).

The Zacatecas Province. In 1804 the mining district of Sierra de los Pinos produced 950 pesos worth of coarse earthenware; in Sombrerete there were three potters in 1804, also producing coarse earthenware, possibly glazed (*loza ordinaria de barro*). In 1806, the coarse earthenware (*loza ordinaria*) used in Fresnillo came from Taltenango, although the fine pottery came from Guadalajara, Michoacán, Puebla, and México. In Taltenango the Indians sold from 200 to 300 pesos worth of coarse earthenware annually, probably glazed, trading some of their wares to neighboring areas (Florescano and Gil 1976:100–101, 106, 122, 127).

Six Spanish-American potters (*alfareros*) operated in Aguacalientes, while in Amoloya, a *pardo* village (one with inhabitants of African descent), black potters apparently made glazed earthenware (McMillen 1983:178). In Aguacalientes, in 1804, 5,600 loads of coarse earthenware were produced (Florescano and Gil 1976:110). [The number of pots per load depends on their size, capacity, and shape; for example, a load might be equivalent to 30 large jars, 120 small ollas (1½ liter capacity), 24 large ollas (8 liters each), or 20 very large ollas (10 liters each) (Pozas 1949:125, 144).]

Nueva Galicia

Burnished ceramics had been manufactured in Tonalá since the mid-sixteenth century, under the direction of Spanish priests (Charlton and Reiff Katz 1979:53). From the early 1600s on, glazed ceramics were produced in Tacotlán and were distributed beyond the limits of Nueva Galicia (modern-day Jalisco). Tonalá ceramics were also widely distributed. Nueva Galicia and Nueva Vizcaya potters sent ceramics to Mexico City every year in the early 1700s (Calvo 1992:360–361, 440–441). In 1697, Guadalajara red-and-black vases were exported to Spain, where these vessels were highly valued, with a price of half a real each in the New World and up to 6 reales each in Europe (Gemelli Carreri 1983:19; García and Albert 1991:45). In 1827 the inhabitants of San Pedro and Tonalá specialized in the production of a porous earthenware that was distributed all over Mexico; in Guadalajara the same kind of ceramics was manufactured (Ward 1981:681).

Michoacán

In 1583, master potters were sent to Patzcuaro to develop the industry of lead-glazed ceramics (Cervantes 1939:18; Garrido 1985:10). Regional specializations had been developed since the early colonial period: Tzintzuntzan produced black pottery; Patamban, Santa Fé de la Laguna, Panícuaro, and Patzcuaro, green glazed ceramics (Lugo 1971:47). In 1822, pottery production was one of the main industrial activities in Tzintzuntzan; the earthenwares manufactured in this town were highly valued and distributed all over Mexico (Martínez de Lejarza 1974:121).

Patamban was a pottery-making center probably since the colonial period (Gouy-Gilbert 1987:12). Patamban and Tzintzuntzan also manufactured red burnished pottery during the seventeenth century; ceramics made in Michoacán were widely distributed all over New Spain, mainly at the Feria de San Juan de los Lagos in the modern state of Jalisco (Lugo 1971:85). This fair was established in the mid-seventeenth century (Carrera Stampa 1959:228–229). In 1822, Patamban was famous for its cups or mugs (burnished *búcaros*) and ordinary earthenwares (*loza ordinaria*) (Martínez de Lejarza 1974:149).

Oaxaca

Glazed earthenwares have been produced in Oaxaca since the mid-sixteenth century (McMillen 1983:160).

Nueva Vizcaya

In 1803, only coarse red earthenware (*loza colorada y ordinaria*) was produced in Nueva Vizcaya (Florescano and Gil 1976:94).

The Northern Provinces

Ethnohistoric accounts show that Pueblo ceramics were produced and traded in New Mexico throughout the Spanish colonial era and beyond. For example, in 1694, Pecos Indians traveled to sell their wares to Spaniards stationed in Santa Fe; in 1796, the female potters from Abiquiu were selling pots. Thus, the Spanish colonists were supplied by the Indians (Snow 1984:101).

In 1811, Antonio Barreiro noted that many of the Pueblo Indians (from Taos, Jemes, Santa Clara, Picurís, San Ildefonso, Pojoaque, Nambé, Tesuque, Pecos, Cochiti, Sia, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Sandia, Isleta, Laguna, Zuñi, Acoma, and Santa Ana) were manufacturing pots (Florescano and Gil 1976:221–222, 278). The Apaches also supplied vessels to the inhabitants of New Mexico in the mid-nineteenth century (Snow 1984:102).

By 1807 in eastern Coahuila Valladama, near Monclova, commonware pottery was produced

for the Texas frontier area; in Bahía del Espíritu Santo, near Goliad, a lead-glazed wheel-thrown rust-colored earthenware was probably produced. Michoacán glazed earthenware was also traded to Texas between 1800 and 1811 (McMillen 1983:179, 188, 190).

CERAMICS AND TRADE DURING THE COLONIAL AND REPUBLICAN PERIODS

Juan de Oñate's entry into New Mexico in 1598 opened new territories for exploration and colonization by the Spaniards. Although ceramic artifacts are not listed among the items that Oñate and his troops carried for the expedition, jars, ollas, and jugs containing oil and medicines were included. The soldiers also carried among their belongings copper, iron, and brass comales, frying pans, kettles, ollas, boilers, and mortars, as well as pewter plates (Hammond and Rey 1953:133, 218, 222, 225, 238–239, 248, 251, 253, 255, 260, 267, 270–272). Once the Spanish colonists settled in the area along the Río Grande, the missionaries, government officials, and soldiers all required supplies. The settlers were accustomed to a particular way of life, and textiles, metal tools, firearms, and ceramics were among the items they needed every day.

Colonists in New Mexico tried to re-create the society with which they were familiar, whether in Spain or New Spain, marking their status with fine imported goods; soon, however, they were forced to adopt a different way of life, consuming mainly local products (Simmons 1983:72–73). The Pueblo potters supplied cups, soup plates, and pitchers—forms introduced by the Spanish—as well as ollas and bowls to the colonists and their descendants (Snow 1973:56).

Items produced in New Spain, Europe, and the Far East traveled north on the Camino Real. The Spanish colonial system made all the provinces dependent on the colonial capital, the central point for the royal road.

In the sixteenth century, the Camino Real ran from Mexico City to Guadalajara; later the route went to New Mexico passing through Aguascalientes, Zacatecas, Fresnillo, Sombrerete, Nombre de Dios, Durango, Santa Bárbara, and El Paso del Norte. The road was also called “El Camino de la Plata” (the Silver Road) because it connected the northern mining towns with Mexico City; it passed through Querétaro, San Luis de la Paz, San Felipe (today San Felipe Torres Mochas), and Zacatecas. From Puebla, Mexico, Veracruz, and Acapulco European majolicas and earthenwares, Oriental porcelains, as well as majolicas, glazed, and burnished ceramics made in New Spain were distributed among the inhabitants. Along the Camino Real, pottery manufacturing became established in central commercial areas; potters were located along the major transportation routes wherever water and clay deposits were available, mainly in mining towns where pigments and glaze raw materials existed, usually close to presidios and ecclesiastical centers. These potters supplied the regional population and also exported their wares.

From Durango to Santa Fe, passing through the mining towns of the Santa Bárbara region (including the Real de Parral), the Camino Real was known as the Camino de Chihuahua. Merchants supplied the mining centers and the northern province of New Mexico, bringing goods from all over New Spain (*productos de la tierra*) as well as those imported via the fleet (*flota*) system from Europe or on the Manila galleon (*la Nao de la China*) that arrived annually at Acapulco (Fournier 1990; Hadley 1979:111).

Parral, capital of Nueva Vizcaya, benefitted in particular from the trade with New Mexico. In 1637, the city had thirty-seven shops and in 1642 forty-seven; the number of stores reflects the fact that Parral was the commercial center of the mining district; it might also reflect in part the trade with the province of New Mexico. The New Mexican supply service to the missions, organized by the Crown in 1609, lasted until the Pueblo Revolt in 1680; the supply was reestablished in 1700, and it

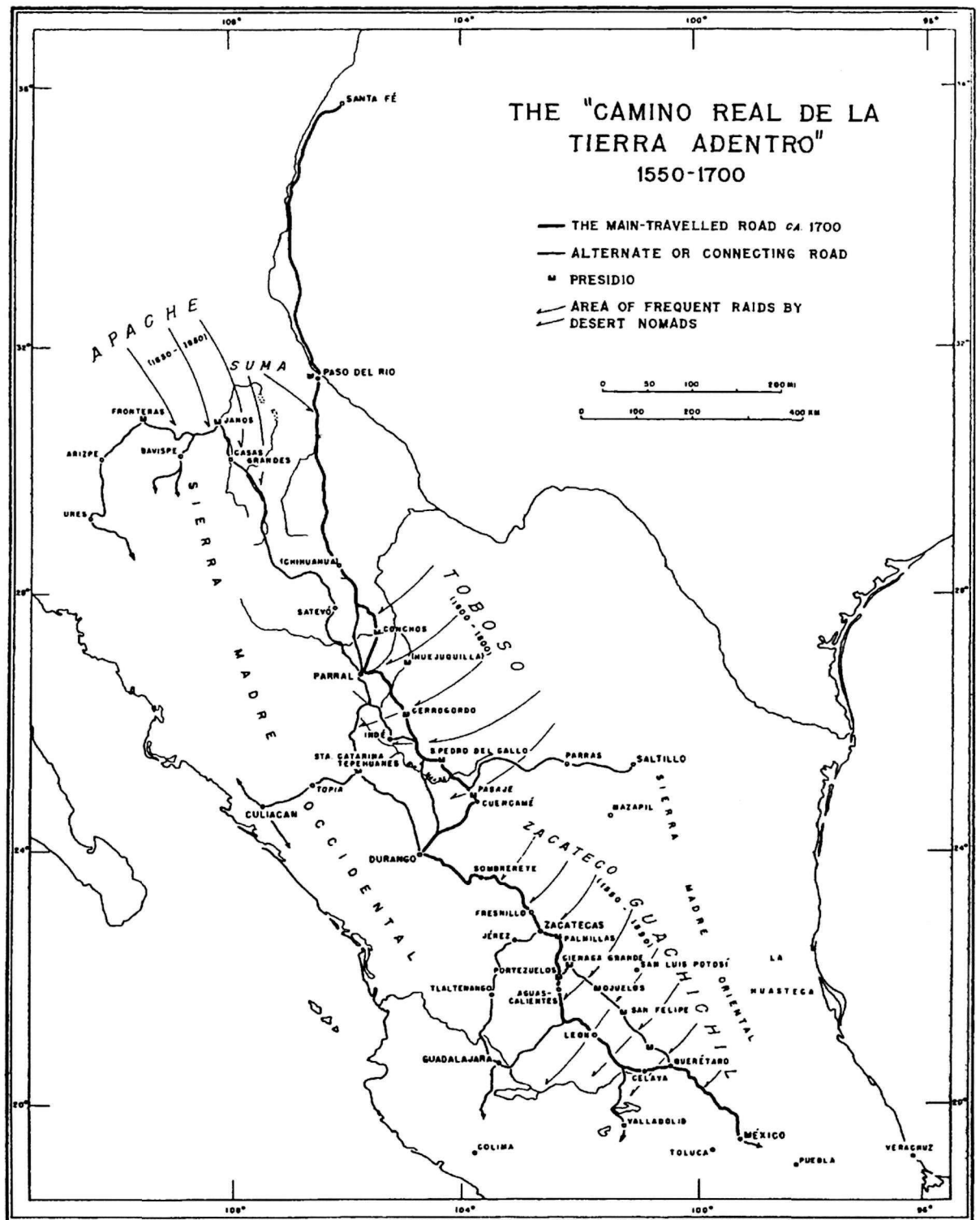


Fig. 12.2
Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. (West, 1949)

may have continued supplying the mining district as well (West 1949:83–85, 88, 90). In addition, government officials appointed in Santa Fe controlled illegal mercantile transactions with Parral. Merchants also transported goods between Santa Fe and the interior, traveling south along the Camino Real as far as Mexico City (Snow 1993:135–137).

In 1641, Parral merchants were already selling painted dishes from Puebla, platters or *platoncillos* (possibly glazed) from Michoacán, Mexican pitchers or *jarros* (probably red polished or lead-glazed earthenwares), small jars or *tecomatillos* (*suacales*), red Mexican pitchers (*jarrillos*) that must have been polished and were probably made in Cuauhtitlán, small jars with honey (*botijuelas*), and little jars (*ollitas*) with saffron (Boyd-Bowman 1972:241, 247).

Majolicas from Puebla, Chinese porcelains, Tonalá burnished and glazed earthenwares (*loza de Guadalajara*), and Patamban lead-glazed earthenwares—possibly made at other manufacturing centers of Michoacán as well (*vidriada de Michoacán*)—were widely consumed in Parral during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as well as containers for olive oil, that is, olive jars (*botijas* or *botijuelas de aceite*) (Archivo Municipal de Parral, Causas Civiles, 1735, 1737, 1746, 1747, 1753, 1756, 1757, 1768–1770, 1773, 1776, 1781, 1785–1788, 1790, 1818, 1820). Probate and store inventories list majolica plates, cups, bowls, saltcellars, small jars or jugs, and chamber pots (*platos, platones, tazas, pozuelos, calderetas, saleros, ollitas, bacinicas*). Chinese porcelain objects are fairly common, such as large and small plates, large and small cups with or without lids, jugs, spoons, small basins, flasks, large storage jars, miniatures, figurines, and sculptures of lions or “Fu dogs” (*platos, platitos, platitos chiquitos, platones, platoncillos, tazas grandes y chicas, tazas poncheras, tazas calderas, pozuelos con tapaderita, pocillos, tazas conserveras, jarritos, jarritas, cucharas, palanguitas, frascos, tibores, juguetes de escaparate, figuritas, leones*). The inventories include jars and jugs or pitchers from Guadalajara; large and small jars, jugs, chamber pots, cups, casseroles, plates, pitchers, bowls, and saltcellars from Michoacán are also listed.

Some of these ceramics were distributed to New Mexico’s consumers. Probate inventories from Santa Fe, dating mainly to the eighteenth century, list majolica from Puebla, Chinese porcelains, and Michoacán earthenwares (Snow 1986).

All sorts of merchandise and goods from New Spain, as well as imported, were distributed through the fair or *ferias* system, formally established by the Crown in the eighteenth century but operating since the early colonial period. The San Juan de los Lagos fair (today in Jalisco) was organized in the mid-seventeenth century. There, merchants from the Provincias Internas bought goods for sale in Durango, Chihuahua, Saltillo, Monterrey, Monclova, and other northern towns. The Saltillo fair, started in the early 1600s, distributed Oriental porcelains and earthenwares produced in the Guadalajara region. The Chihuahua fair supplied dealers from Taos with the leftovers of other important fairs celebrated annually in New Spain (Carrera Stampa 1959:228–229, 231–236).

CERAMIC ANALYSIS FROM PARAJE DE SAN DIEGO

The Paraje de San Diego is located approximately 28 miles north of Las Cruces, New Mexico. The site covers at least 32,000 m² and is characterized by a scatter of ceramics, lithic artifacts, and metal fragments. This campsite along the Camino Real was on the southern plains of the Jornada del Muerto, two miles above the Río Grande; it was a popular campsite during the colonial period.

In the summer of 1994 a joint Bureau of Land Management (BLM)/New Mexico State University (NMSU)/Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia/Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) project surveyed the site and excavated several test units totaling 200 m², less than 2% of the

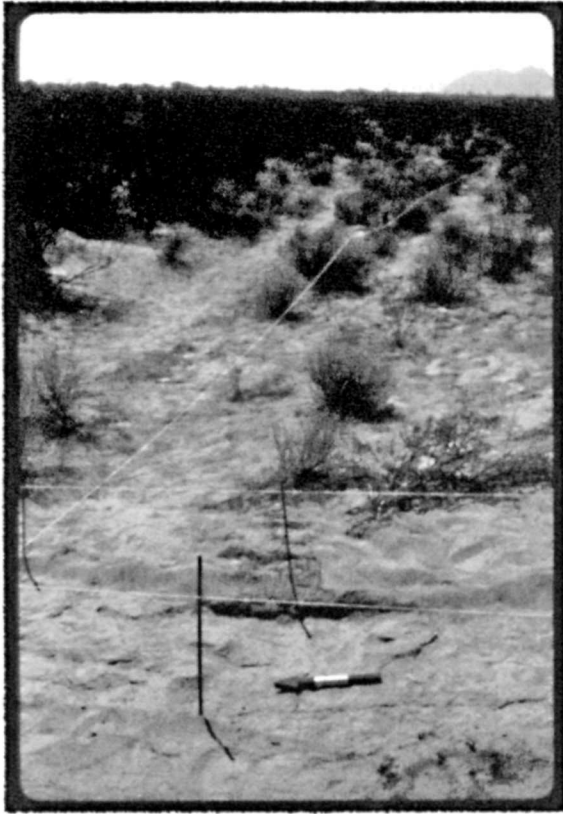


Fig. 12.3

Archaeological survey at Paraje de San Diego showing cross section and alignment of El Camino Real. Photo courtesy Bureau of Land Management. From *El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro: National Historic Trail Feasibility Study Environmental Assessment*, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1997.

site area (under the direction of Edward Staski, NMSU). At the request of the BLM and under an assistance agreement between the BLM and the Camino Real Project, Inc., I completed a typological study of the ceramics, which is reported here.

The ceramic assemblage from the Paraje de San Diego consists of 913 sherds (most of them extremely small); 7% of the ceramics date to the prehistoric period; 6% are probably prehistoric; 58% have a temporal range covering from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries; 7% are placed between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; 6% date to the seventeenth century; 8% have a temporal range from the seventeenth to the early eighteenth century; and 8% (Mexican glazed ceramics and Spanish olive jar bodies) can only be dated to the colonial or historical period.

The only prehistoric type identified is El Paso Brown (see Kelley 1985:156 and Hill 1991 for descriptions); an unidentified black-on-white sherd is also prehistoric. Utility wares (gray, brown, buff, red) form the bulk of the ceramics categorized as probably prehistoric.

Rio Grande or possible Rio Grande glazed (on red, yellow, or buff) and plain ceramics are abundant (constituting more than 40% of the assemblage). Since the sherds are small and rims are rare, a limited number of types was identified. Glazes E and F (ca. 1460–1680) (Snow 1982, 1989); Glaze F (ca. 1625–1700) (Miller and O’Leary 1992:130), Jornada Glaze-on-red, and Kotyiti Glaze-on-yellow (ca. 1550–1700) (Snow 1982, 1989)

are identified in small frequencies. The sherds labeled unidentified glazed/red (19.5% of the collections) might be Jornada glaze/red. Tabirá Plain (from Las Humanas), mostly made during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Hayes et al. 1981:75), represents less than 2% of the collection. Corona or possible Corona Plain, on the contrary, constitutes 18% of the assemblage; its production at Gran Quivira began in the mid-fifteenth century and continued until 1672 (Hayes et al. 1981:65). This type was associated with the Salinas Pueblos.

Tewa redwares are also represented, including forms made to satisfy Spanish demand for soup plates (Snow 1989). These ceramics date to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Harlow 1973; Miller and O’Leary 1992:123; Snow 1984, 1989) and represent 6% of the Paraje de San Diego assemblage.

Spanish Earthenwares

White olive jars. Twenty-three body sherds from olive jars of an unidentified style were recovered. The sherds exhibit a thin white slip on the exterior surface; turning marks are evident, and the paste of these wheel-thrown vessels is dense, with mica inclusions. After studying large collections of olive jars from different Spanish wrecks, Marken (1994:133) concludes that seventeenth-century *botijas* are unglazed, like the examples from Paraje de San Diego.

Oriental Ceramics

Chinese Porcelain, Green Series. Two sherds apparently from the same Chinese porcelain plate were recovered. Light and dark green and brown enamels were used to paint a landscape; one of the sherds exhibits part of a tree on the bottom of the plate.

Green series Chinese porcelain dishes have been identified in Pre-Revolt deposits at the Palace of the Governors. This variety of hard-paste porcelain, painted overglaze with green, black, and other enamel colors, was manufactured before 1680 (Shulsky 1994:15–16).

Chinese porcelains of different series and styles, dating to the seventeenth century, have been identified at Quarai (Hurt 1990:121), Abó (Toulouse 1949:21), the Palace of the Governors (C. Snow 1992:17), and San Gabriel (Shulsky 1994:14).

Mexican Majolicas

Mexico City Cream. One sherd of this type was identified, possibly from a soup plate. The paste is pinkish white, porous, and soft; the glaze is thin. This type was established by Fournier and Charlton (1993) for the Templo Mayor (Mexico City) collections. Lister and Lister (1982:24) simply list it as Mexico City White, Variant Two; it is commonly found in early colonial deposits in Mexico City.

Mexico City Green on Cream. One sherd was identified, possibly from a medicine jar. The paste is pinkish white, porous, and soft. It is decorated with grayish parallel bands on the exterior. The bands must have originally been green, but the glaze is partially devitrified.

This type is described as a common grade majolica produced in Mexico City during the early colonial period. The paste is soft and cream-colored; the tin and lead glaze is thin. Patterns painted in green on cream include floral motifs; hemispherical bowls and plates are common (Lister and Lister 1982:24–25, 28). The type has been found in early seventeenth century deposits in Florida (Deagan 1987:75).

Mexico City Blue on Cream. Four soup plate sherds were identified. The paste is porous and soft; the color varies from pinkish white to pink. Floral patterns are painted in blue on the rim.

The petrographic analysis (by Ing. Victor Manuel Díaz from the Geology Institute, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City) shows that this type has a volcanic-andesitic paste; minerals are biotite (5%) and quartz (15%) in a clay matrix (more than 50%). A sample from the Templo Mayor collections was analyzed for comparative purposes. The origin is volcanic (andesitic tuff), with biotite (5%), quartz (5%), and orthoclase phenocrysts in zones (15%), in a porphyric clay matrix (more than 50%).

This type is also described as a common grade majolica, probably produced in Mexico City during the early colonial period. The paste is soft and cream-colored; the tin and lead glaze is thin. Once again, patterns painted in blue include floral motifs, and the most common vessel forms are hemispherical bowls and plates (Lister and Lister 1982:24–27; Deagan 1987:75). This type is common in seventeenth-century sites from Sonora (Fournier and Fournier 1989:24); it is part of the ceramic assemblage from San Juan Bautista, a site dating from 1650 to 1750. Thus, the temporal range for Mexico City Blue on Cream might be longer than that suspected by Lister and Lister.

San Luis Blue on White. One sherd of this type was identified. The paste is pink, porous, and soft; thus the type is defined as a common grade majolica. It exhibits part of a floral pattern and two parallel bands painted in blue.

Goggin (1968:154–158) mentions two paste variants (possibly two different types), one reddish and other cream. Lister and Lister (1982) include this type in the fine grade, without commenting on paste differences.



Fig. 12.4

*Top row: Puebla Blue/White cup rim and body sherd
Second row: Abó Polychrome, Aucilla Polychrome plate rim sherds
Third row: Chinese porcelain, green series plate bases
Bottom: Presidios Green Glaze olla rim*

This type has been identified in New Mexico at Las Majadas (D. Snow 1992:339), the Palace of the Governors (C. Snow 1992:274), La Fonda (Wiseman 1988:31), Quarai (Hurt 1990:123), Abó (Goggin 1968:85), LA 34 (southeast of Cochiti) (Snow 1971:8), Puaray (Toulouse 1976:157), Hawikuh, Awatobi, and San Luis (Snow 1965:30), and Pecos and Gran Quivira (Lister and Lister 1976:132).

Mexico City White. Three soup plate sherds of this type were identified. The paste varies from light red to reddish yellow; it is compact and hard, with small rounded and reddish particles, mica, and white opaque inclusions.

The petrographic analysis shows a volcanic-andesitic origin. The minerals include biotite (5%) and plagioclase (10%) in a microcrystalline clay matrix (more than 50%). A sherd from the Templo Mayor collections (Mexico City) was also analyzed for comparative purposes. The paste origin is volcanic-andesitic, with porphyridic texture. Minerals include biotite (5%), orthoclase (5%), labradorite (10%), quartz (1%), and limonite (3%) in a clay matrix (more than 50%).

This type is described by Lister and Lister (1982:14, 22, 24) as a fine-grade majolica produced in Mexico City during the early colonial period (ca. 1550 to the seventeenth century). They list it as Mexico City White, Variety One.

Mexico City Green on White (fine grade). This type might be a variant of Fig Springs Polychrome, green series, identified in the Templo Mayor collections (Fournier and Charlton 1993). It is a fine-grade majolica probably produced in Mexico City during the early colonial period. Two sherds from the same cup were identified. The paste is identical to that of Mexico City White. A green floral pattern is painted on the exterior.

Aucilla Polychrome. Four soup plate sherds were identified; three are from the same vessel. The paste is identical to that of Mexico City White; thus it must be considered a fine-grade majolica produced in Mexico City during the colonial period. The rim exhibits green ovoids encircled by black lines and a yellow band. Goggin (1968:161–163) established this type, dating it from about 1650 to 1685. This type is part of the archaeological assemblage from the Templo Mayor (Fournier and Charlton 1993), although Lister and Lister (1982) do not list it for the cathedral collections, located less than 100 m away.

This type has been found in New Mexico at Puaray (Goggin 1968:83) and Patoqua (Snow 1965:31).

Puebla Blue on White. Thirty sherds were identified; 28 are from the same cup, and 2 are from different soup plates. The pink paste is compact with no visible inclusions, similar to Mexico City White. The paste is volcanic-andesitic; minerals include biotite (5%) and quartz (15%) in a microcrystalline clay matrix (more than 50%).

A sherd painted with the same pattern, found in Mexico City, was also analyzed. The paste has a volcanic origin, possibly andesitic. Minerals include biotite (5%), plagioclase and labradorite (10%), quartz (10%), pirotite (5%), and limonite (2%), in a porphyric clay matrix (more than 50%).

The cups exhibit a Chinese-style pattern painted in two shades of blue, with panels and floral (with a thick pigment applied) design elements. One plate rim has a band and ovoids; the other plate exhibits bands.

Goggin (1968:190–195) established this type with a chronological position in the eighteenth century. Deagan (1987:77–78) lists types made in Puebla during the seventeenth century. The same Chinese-style pattern was also found in Casas Grandes (Di Peso et al. 1974:197); this pattern probably dates to the seventeenth century since it was identified in Pre-Revolt deposits at the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe.

In New Mexico, Puebla Blue on White has been identified at Puaray, Pecos, the Palace of the



Fig. 12.5
Puebla Blue on White plate.
Ceramoteca de la Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia, México D.F.

Governors, Cuyamungué (Goggin 1968:84, 86, 88), Quarai (Hurt 1990:124), LA 34 (Snow 1971:8), Galisteo, San Marcos, Awatobi, and San Cristobal (Snow 1965:30), and Gran Quivira (Lister and Lister 1976:134).

Abó Polychrome. Eight soup plate sherds from the same Abó Polychrome vessel were identified. The paste is identical to that of Puebla Blue on White. The rim exhibits black lines and a yellow band. Below, a floral pattern is painted in green, blue, and yellow; these designs are outlined in black.

Goggin (1968:169–173) established this type and dates it to the latter half of the seventeenth century. Deagan (1987:81) dates it in the circum-Caribbean region from 1650 to 1750.

The petrographic analysis shows a probable volcanic origin. Minerals include biotite (5%), plagioclase (10%), and limonite (10%) in a clay matrix (more than 50%). A comparable sherd from the Templo Mayor collections is volcanic with andesitic composition and porphyric texture. Minerals include orthoclase (5%), biotite (5%), plagioclase and labradorite (10%), and limonite (10%) in a clay matrix (more than 50%).

In New Mexico Abó Polychrome has been identified at Quarai (Hurt 1990:122), Puaray, Kuaua, Abó, and Pecos (Goggin 1968:83–86), LA 34 (Snow 1971:8), and Hawikuh, San Cristobal, and San Luis (Snow 1965:30).

Mexican Pseudomajolicas

Romita Plain. The type is described by Lister and Lister as a slipped and glazed earthenware imitating majolica. It was produced during the early colonial period, probably in Mexico City. The paste is compact and well fired (similar to Late Aztec wares manufactured in the Basin of Mexico). The most common vessel forms are hemispherical bowls and plates. This type has been identified at an unnamed hacienda south of Albuquerque (Lister and Lister 1982:34–35, 37).

One hemispherical bowl sherd was identified in the assemblage. The paste is light reddish brown, compact, and hard.

Romita Sgraffito. This type is described by Lister and Lister as a slipped and glazed earthenware imitating majolica. The paste and vessel forms are identical to those of Romita Plain. The interiors of vessels exhibit a white slip, with incisions marking the patterns; green and white colorants are employed. It was produced during the early colonial period, probably in Mexico City (Lister and Lister 1982:34–35, 37). This type is common in seventeenth-century sites in Sonora (Fournier and Fournier 1989:24); it is part of the ceramic assemblage from the San Juan Bautista Real, a site dating from 1650 to 1750. Thus, the temporal range for Romita Sgraffito might be longer than that suspected by Lister and Lister.

Two soup plate sherds were identified. It is impossible to identify the pattern because of the small size of the sherds.

The petrographic analysis shows that this type has a probable volcanic paste. The paste of a comparable sherd found in Mexico City is volcanic-sedimentary, probably from volcanic tuff. The minerals include labradorite and plagioclase (10%), biotite and limonite (10%); clay forms an altered matrix (20%), with volcanic glass (more than 50%).

Mexican Glazed Earthenwares

Presidios Green. Four jar or olla sherds were identified. The paste is pink and porous with large quartz inclusions. The paste origin is sedimentary; it has altered plagioclase (15%), quartz phenocrysts and microcrystalline quartz in an altered clay matrix (more than 30%). The emerald green glaze is thick and unevenly applied. This type is commonly found at late-eighteenth-century presidios like Carrizal (where the type was established) and San Elizario. Its temporal range is

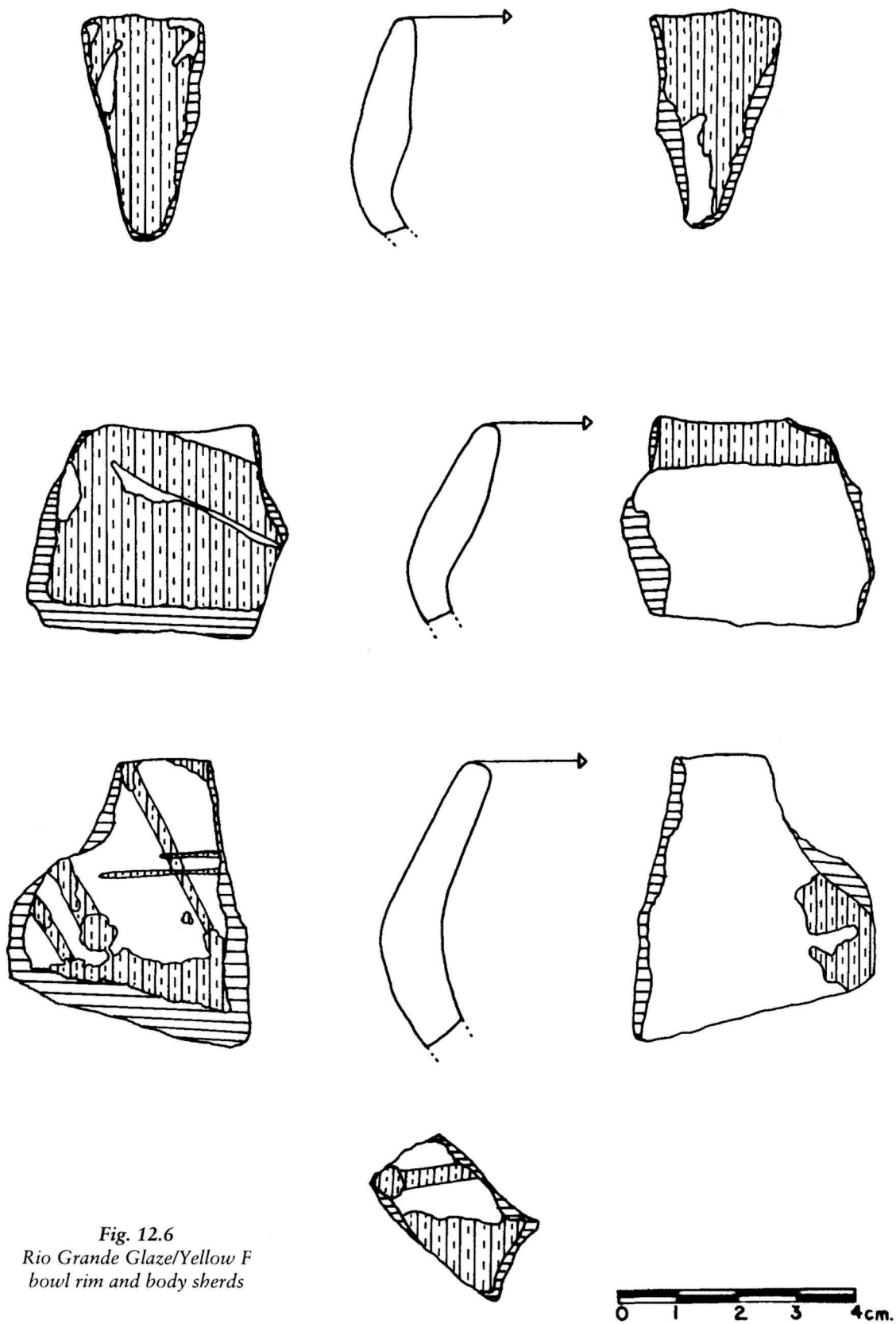


Fig. 12.6
Rio Grande Glaze/Yellow F
bowl rim and body sherds

uncertain; it might have been produced throughout the borderlands, possibly until the 1800s.

Seven sherds possibly of a well-fired variant of Presidios Green were identified.

Lead-glazed earthenwares. Sherds of various glaze colors were scattered in the excavation units at Paraje de San Diego. The colors are green, dark green, orange or clear glaze, brown, and light brown; the paste is usually reddish yellow, porous, and soft. Forms identified include bowls, ollas, basins, pitchers or jugs (*jarros*), and jars. One light brown jar exhibits incisions on the exterior, probably the result of smoothing the surface.

Glaze color differences might be the result of uncontrolled firing conditions in up-draft kilns. The chronology for these taxonomic units is uncertain, as is their place of manufacture in Mexico.

The petrographic analysis of an orange-glaze sherd shows a probable sedimentary origin. The minerals include plagioclase, limonite, and metamorphic quartz in a clay matrix. A green-glaze sherd was also analyzed. The paste has a volcanic-andesitic origin. Minerals include biotite (5%), oligoclase and labradorite (20%), and quartz (1%) in a clay matrix (more than 50%). These differences show that lead-glazed ceramics were manufactured both in central (volcanic) and probably western Mexico (sedimentary in some areas, including the Michoacán-Jalisco region).

Polished red from Central Mexico. One red polished sherd (possibly from a jar) was identified.

Snow (1992:22) found a fragment of a “globular jar with a long neck and a single loop handle” at the Pre-Revolt Las Majadas site; Thomas H. Charlton identified it as a colonial black/red type produced in Central Mexico. Kidder (1936:382) reports a red bowl sherd found at Pecos:

The bowl wall seems to have had gentle vertical undulations, whose valleys, on the interior, were textured, over the original polish, by light horizontal scoring. Over the scoring, in one of the valleys, a scroll has been drawn with some blunt-ended object which has restored the polish. The polished exterior is not decorated.

López Cervantes (1976:62), Müller (1973), and Noguera (1934) illustrate similar or identical examples dating to the early colonial period, found in Puebla and Mexico City. Redwares of this class were manufactured in the Basin of Mexico, mainly in Cuauhtitlán; possibly polished redwares were widely used by the Spanish colonists and their descendants in central New Spain. Apparently they were status items, at least during the early colonial period (Charlton et al. in press).

Comments on the Ceramic Assemblage

Ceramic assemblages from archaeological sites in New Mexico show extremely small percentages of majolica types relative to locally produced Indian ceramics, both before and after the Pueblo Revolt. Majolica forms 1–10% of the collections (Snow 1986). In central Mexican urban sites, majolica occurs in dramatically higher percentages; for example, in the Convento de San Jerónimo located in Mexico City, majolica types constitute 20% of the historical ceramics, while Chinese porcelains—status symbols among the higher classes—represent less than 3% (Fournier 1990:251). Coarse (smoothed-finished) and glazed earthenwares usually form the bulk of the assemblage in central Mexican historical sites (around 50% of the collections). The diversity of types is also considerably higher in Mexico City than in the borderlands. The Templo Mayor collections include more than 40 majolica types (exclusively from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), not counting Spanish majolicas (Fournier and Charlton 1993).

Lead-glazed earthenwares and majolicas were traded to New Mexico in vessel forms suited to the colonists’ tastes. The sherds excavated at the Paraje de San Diego reflect this fact as well as the activities carried out by those who traveled and brought supplies to this Provincia Interna and stopped at the paraje. Serving vessels occur in the highest percentage: soup plates constitute 30%, bowls 12%, cups 20% (although most fragments are from the same Puebla Blue on White cup), and jugs or

pitchers (*jarros*) 3%. Cooking vessels include ollas (24%) and *cazuelas* or basins (1%). Water jars comprise only 5% of these wares.

The isolation of New Mexico as well as the limited number of Spanish settlers are evident in the archaeological record. The use of Indian ceramics for storage or food preparation is also evident.

The Paraje de San Diego ceramic assemblage from the historic period dates mostly to the seventeenth century, probably from 1650 to 1680. A Pre-Revolt occupation of the campsite is evident. Some of these ceramics might have been made by the Mansos or Sumas living in the El Paso area; most of the historic Indian ceramics were probably produced by the Pueblo Indians (who moved south beginning around 1656), or by groups living in the Socorro area. ♣

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“Ultimo Poblado del Mundo”

(The Last Place on Earth)

*Evidence for Imported Retablos in the
Churches of Seventeenth-Century New Mexico*

James E. Ivey



IN 1993 I DISCUSSED the shipping records for the missions, available in some detail in the treasury accounts of the viceregal government in Mexico City from 1598 to 1631. When the shipping records are combined with mission inventories and the results of archaeological investigations of some missions, a detailed picture of the typical furnishings of the missions of New Mexico can be assembled.

Seventeenth-century New Mexico was a part of the life of Mexico, rather different from the somewhat more rural backwater it became in the eighteenth century (but see Snow 1995). One result of this participation in the culture of mainstream Mexico is that the design of the mission churches is more powerful, more optimistic than those of the eighteenth century. Because master masons could not be induced to come to such a distant frontier, the Franciscans themselves designed and supervised the construction of the mission churches, in the same manner that they usually built the convento buildings on the northern frontier in the next two centuries. As a result, the mission churches were essentially enlarged versions of the typical northern convento building: flat, undecorated walls and a flat or simple low-pitched roof. This simplicity of design and structural ornamentation, however, did not require a similar simplicity in church furnishings, vestments, or in the visual center of the church interior, the main altar. The principal decorative elements of the interior, ordered from elsewhere and shipped to the mission, were the equal of any in the mission system of the New World.

The centerpieces of the church, the retablos over the main and side altars, were typical of this distinctive approach of richness within simplicity. The surviving physical remains of the seventeenth-century missions show that the Franciscan designers of the churches clearly intended to have large, ornate wooden retablos behind the main and side altars when they built the altar areas of their churches. Retablos, however, were not included in the original equipment shipped to a mission. This is not surprising, since a retablo was custom-fit into its sanctuary, and the actual size and shape required would not be known until the design of the full-sized church had been worked out. Therefore, at the time of their completion, missions usually had some substitute for a retablo to serve until the mission was able to purchase one made in Mexico City; such a purchase required the development of the fields, herds, and other material wealth of the mission until the expenses of the construction and shipment could be paid, and this process could take some time. The most common

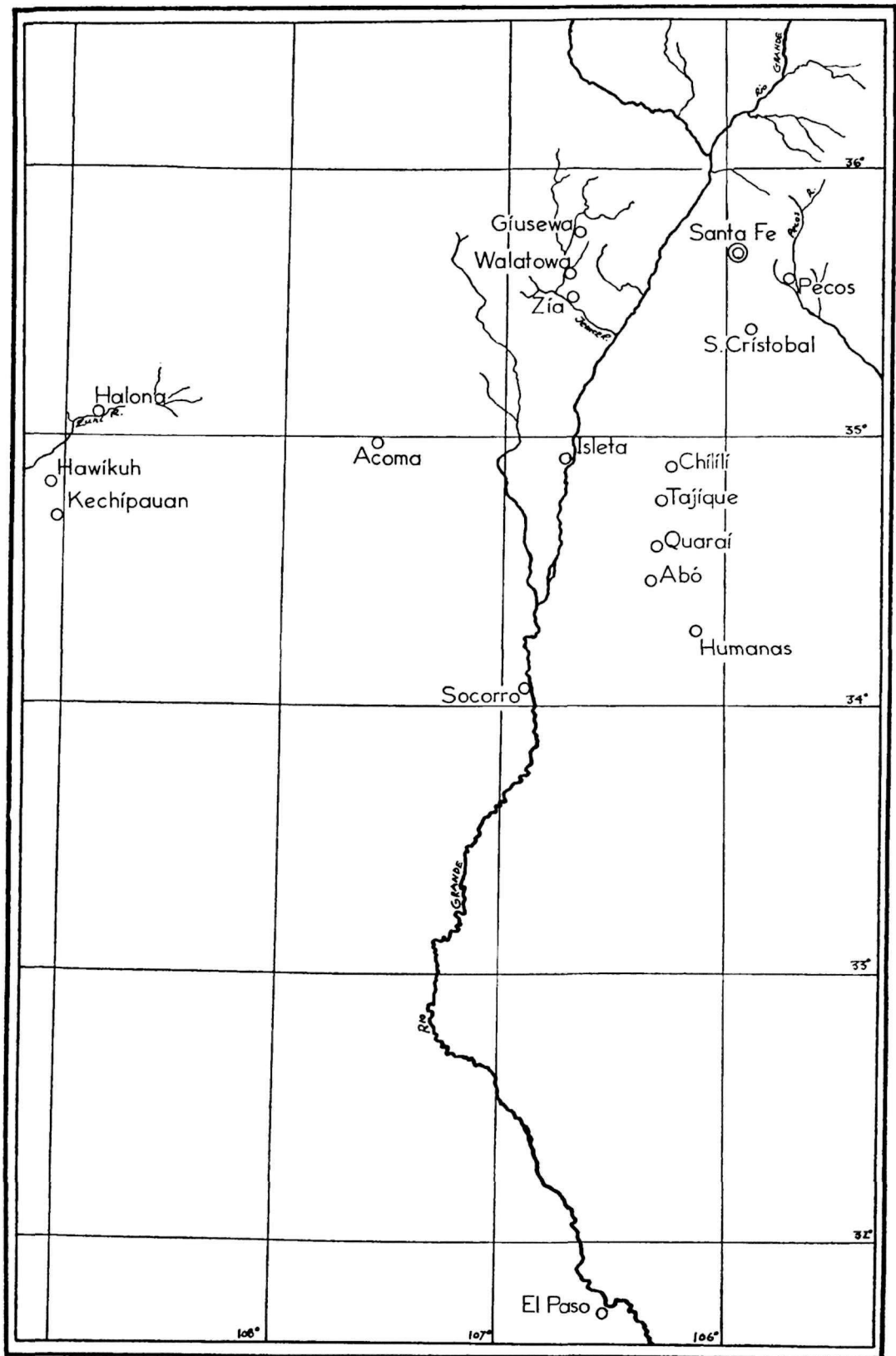


Fig. 13.1

Map of 17th century mission ruins in New Mexico. From *The Religious Architecture of New Mexico*, George Kubler. Published for the School of American Research by University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

substitute was the use of the wall itself as the retablo, with the paintings hanging directly on the wall, and nichos inset into the wall fabric or made of wood fastened to the wall in which the carved images were placed; this was similar to the method used in New Mexico in the eighteenth century, as at San Agustín de Isleta or Nuestra Señora de los Angeles de Pecos (Adams and Chávez 1956:203–204, 210). Sometimes these “wall retablos” would be made more decorative by painting a retablo design on the wall. Such painted wall retablos were used in Mexico in the sixteenth century, as at the Iglesia de Huatapera, Uruapan, Michoacán, or the open chapel at San Andrés de Epazoyucan, Hidalgo, for example (Guzmán et al. 1992:92, 140); in New Mexico in the eighteenth century, as at Santo Domingo (Adams and Chávez 1956:132–133); and in Alta California in the nineteenth century, as at San Francisco de Asís, also known as Dolores (Neuerberg 1989:24, 51). A second method was the mounting of locally made retablos on the apse wall; these could be as simple as a clay and painted plaster retablo constructed on an armature of wicker, or as complex as carved and painted wooden retablos. In some cases, the image of a retablo could be painted on canvas and hung on the wall above the altars, as at San Felipe Neri de Albuquerque in the eighteenth century (Adams and Chávez 1956:146).

Well-to-do missions undoubtedly were able to order one or several retablos very quickly, and they would have arrived soon after completion of the church. Others were never wealthy enough to buy a Mexico City retablo and used the wall retablo designs or locally made clay or wooden retablos throughout the seventeenth century. Some churches eventually added side altars with new, locally made or “imported” retablos brought from outside the province.

The evidence, though scant, shows that the retablos brought to New Mexico were typical of seventeenth-century Mexico rather than of some local tradition; that they were, in fact, made in Mexico and shipped to New Mexico. This evidence may be found in three areas: shipping records, church inventories or descriptions, and archaeological remains. Shipping records for the missions are available in some detail in the treasury records of the viceregal government in Mexico City from 1598 to 1631; after 1631 they generally have much less information. The primary group of seventeenth-century inventories is that made in 1672, of which the listings for nine churches are available (Scholes and Adams 1952). In addition, there are occasional references to altar fittings and furnishings in churches and conventos in other correspondence. Detailed excavation information is available for two New Mexico missions, San Bernardo de Awatovi in the Hopi province and Purísima Concepción de Hawikuh, in the province of Zuñi. Less detail is available for four others: San José/San Diego de Giusewa at Jemez Springs and San Gregorio de Abó, San Buenaventura I, San Diego de Tabirá, and Purísima Concepción de Quarai in the Salinas district.

Each of these three sources of evidence about altarpieces offers different kinds of information that can be fitted together to produce a fairly clear idea of the typical retablo actually in use in New Mexico.

RE TAB LO C O N S T R U C T I O N

The retablos and other carved and painted items sent to New Mexico were made by artisans in New Spain, principally Mexico City. This is explicitly stated in the descriptions of the three altars at Acoma in the 1672 inventories, and further shown in the shipping records (Scholes and Adams 1952:34–35). The retablos created in the workshops of Mexico City and shipped to this northern frontier would have been made in the general style called Late or Herreran Renaissance. It is fairly certain that baroque retablos were not made in Mexico until the 1650s, after the first use of solomonic columns on the retablo for the Altar of the Kings in the Cathedral of Puebla, built in 1648 from a design by the great baroque artist Juan Martínez Montañes, of Sevilla (Early 1994:57–58). The retablos of New Mexico would have looked like retablos made in the same workshops during the period of 1620–1650 that survive in other mission churches of Mexico (for example, Toussaint 1967:fig. 48).

The usual practice was for the missionary to send the dimensions, selected saints, and theme of his desired retablos to Mexico City, along with payment arrangements, where an artist was commissioned to produce the complete retablo (the following discussion is based on the methods used in fifteenth-century Spain, as described in Sobré 1989, and sixteenth-century New Spain, as described in Tovar de Teresa 1978:282–289). In churches nearer Mexico City, the artisan would have submitted a proposed design to the missionary for approval before beginning work, but this was impossible for New Mexico. Presumably an officer of the Franciscans in Mexico City carried out the approval step, or it was omitted.

Retablos were almost always built in the workshop of the artisan as a series of pieces, then packed and sent to the site to be assembled; New Mexico was just somewhat farther away than usual. The distance, however, prevented the artisan or one of his staff from making the trip to assemble the altarpiece, as was the usual practice (Sobré 1989:71). Instead, the missionary or a carpenter in New Mexico carried out the assembly. It is interesting to wonder what sort of instructions accompanied each retablo, indicating how the pieces should be put together by someone who had never seen it before.

In the mission church, the imported retablo usually rested on a benchlike structure of stone, adobe, or wood called a *sotabanco*. Larger retablos were placed on a sotabanco built behind the altar, while smaller retablos used the top of the altar itself as the sotabanco; this would have been typical of side altars in New Mexico. The larger retablos were attached to the wall behind the altar. The primary structure of a retablo was a grid or armature of wood fastened to the wall. There were two basic methods of construction: in the first sort, the armature was built and fastened to the wall, the panels of the retablo were nailed or pegged to the armature, and finally the gilded pilasters and horizontals were nailed or pegged over the joints between panels. In the second method, the framework included the gilded horizontals and pilasters, and the panels were slid into place by horizontal rows and pegged or nailed (Sobré 1989:71).

For an idea of the sort of retablo that would have graced the average altar in seventeenth-century New Mexico, we will begin with specific pieces and their approximate sizes, as listed in the 1624 shipping records. These are the charges for the packing crates for a set of retablo components sent from Mexico City probably to the principal church at Santa Fe. The retablo itself is not mentioned in the shipping records, although the tabernacle for the ensemble is listed (*Contaduría* 1624:351–352; Hodge et al. 1945:121). The absence of the retablo itself from the records indicates that it was probably paid for by the mission receiving it, or by donation from private persons. Retablos given by the king would have been listed in the treasury accounts, but none are known, suggesting that in New Mexico, at least, all retablos were bought by the custody (the administrative unit of the church) or given by private donation.

The shipping records indicate the following pieces: the *banco*, or lowest horizontal element of the retablo, was made of panels about 2.1 feet square, and the thickness of the crate implies six panels about 2 inches thick, packed with a little less than 2 inches of space between each (Ivey 1988:212). The next level, the first row or *primer cuerpo* of the retablo above the banco, is not mentioned in these records, but the *cuerpo segundo* or second row was shipped, and was made up of sections about 5.8 by 5.2 feet. Note that the sizes of the banco and the primer cuerpo have been switched here; the banco is always a series of small panels at the base of the retablo just above the sotabanco, and usually consists of a series of depictions of the Twelve Apostles, while the primer cuerpo is always a set of large panels on the main body of the retablo—the designations of the two components must have been inadvertently transposed by the clerk who wrote the accounts.

There was undoubtedly a *cuerpo tercer*, a third level, as well, but this, too, is not mentioned as part of this shipment. The *cornisa*, or uppermost horizontal section, probably of the *cuerpo segundo*, was

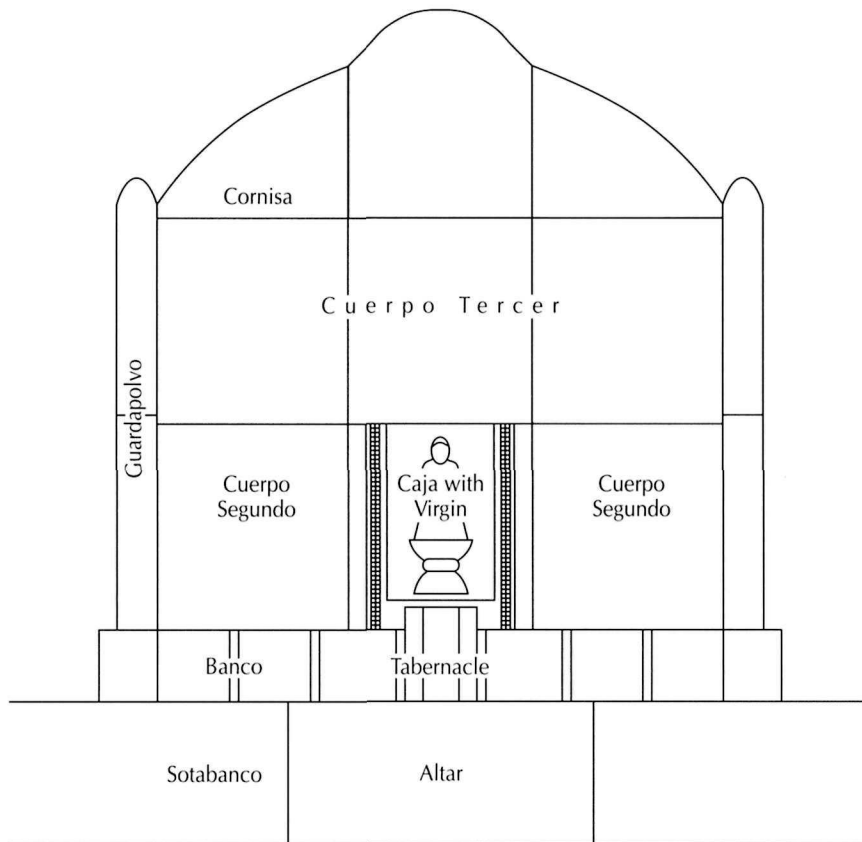


Fig. 13.2
Retablo plan

also in sections about 5.8 by 5.2 feet or smaller. The *guardapolvos*, two tall elements framing the sides of the retablo, and *pilastres*, or vertical ribs between panels that formed the primary visual structure of the retablo (the pilastres were painted or carved in half round or bas relief to look like pillars), were packed together—the panels making up the guardapolvos were about 6.5 feet long and about 1 foot wide, while the pilastres were the same length, but probably narrower, perhaps about 4 to 6 inches wide, somewhat narrower than the columns on either side of the central niche, below. The large *caja*, or central niche, was about 5.8 by 3.3 by 1.7 feet deep, and was to hold an image of the Virgin—the *caja* would have been centered in the second cuerpo directly above the tabernacle. The image of the Virgin to be placed in this niche was about 3.1 feet high, 1.7 feet wide, and 1.5 feet deep; it was to stand on a pedestal about 1.7 feet across, 1.7 feet deep, and 1.7 feet high—the pedestal and Virgin together would therefore have measured about 4.8 feet high, approximately 1 foot less than the height of the central niche. There were also two columns in the round (rather than half-round or bas-relief pilasters), each 5.2 feet tall by about 9 inches in diameter, that probably flanked the *caja*. The approximate sizes of the pieces listed here allow a suggested reconstruction of the general plan of this retablo, which will serve as the representation of a typical imported retablo in New Mexico.

The retablo plan shown is one way of assembling the components listed. If it was constructed with a banco and three cuerpos of about the same size, assembled with the panels edge to edge and fastened to an armature, with the horizontals and pilasters pegged over the joints, this retablo would have been about 15.5 feet wide, not counting the guardapolvos, which would have added about a foot on each side (but would have been angled to fit against the side walls of the apse), and about 27.5 feet high, or a few inches more with capping and framing elements at the top.

The retablo was probably assembled in the manner described here; the two cuerpos not mentioned in the shipping records were probably made up of additional framing elements included in this shipment to enclose paintings and statues already on hand; the new tabernacle and the Virgin in its case in the center of the new cuerpo over the tabernacle were also added to the old wall retablo. The entire group of new and old pieces would have considerably enlarged the retablo, consistent with a major overhaul of the building for which it was intended. It would not be surprising for a primary church such as the one at Santa Fe to have a wall area above the main altar that was about 17 feet wide and 28 feet high; the altar wall at Acoma, for example, was only somewhat smaller, with a width of about 15 feet and a height of at least 25 feet above the top of the altar; a full retablo of three cuerpos was installed here by 1672. In fact, the Santa Fe church was rebuilt in 1625, and these components may have been shipped to New Mexico as part of that reconstruction (Hodge et al. 1945:68, 205, n. 18).

However, most wall areas above the main altar in New Mexico were considerably narrower than the retablo in the 1624 shipment. They usually were 10 to 13 feet wide, and could vary anywhere from 12 to 30 feet high. Quarai, for example, had a back wall 10 feet wide and 22 feet high—a retablo of the design of the 1624 example, resized to fit Quarai’s sanctuary, would have had panels about 3 feet wide and 7 feet high. It is clear, though, that the same set of components listed in the 1624 shipment, varying only moderately in dimensions from one example to the next, could form the retablo for any of the churches in New Mexico.

RETABLOS IN THE INVENTORIED NEW MEXICO MISSIONS

The most surprising evidence presented by the inventories is that they list few retablos in the missions inventoried; even after sixty years of missionization, most of the missions had wall retablos instead of a large, gilded, imported retablo. Of the nine inventories made in 1672, and one made in 1668, only two—Acoma and Chililí—specifically mentioned retablos in the churches, and the Chililí examples may have been painted images on canvas or wood rather than gilded wooden retablos.

If this ratio was consistent throughout the province, then only ten to twenty percent of the “residence” missions, those with an assigned staff of friars, had imported wooden retablos. There were 28 residence missions entered in the 1641 list, 24 in the 1666 list, and 25 in the friar assignment list of 1672. This suggests that no more than three to six missions in New Mexico had imported retablos. However, the list of churches inventoried is strongly biased: it includes only peripheral missions, away from the core area of the northern Río Grande valley, where the wealthiest and most senior missions were located. Of the missions inventoried, those closest to the core area were Acoma, part of the powerful Keres province but at its far western edge, and Socorro and Senecu, of the somewhat newer Piro province in the Río Grande Valley at its southernmost portion; these missions appear to have the richest inventories of those for which we have documentation. Therefore, the actual number of retablos was undoubtedly larger.

Acoma

The inventory gives descriptions of a number of retablos, of several varieties, in the nine missions inventoried. At San Estevan de Acoma, the inventory describes a full set of standard retablos like those that could be found in many missions in New Spain. The main retablo at Acoma consisted of three cuerpos, or major horizontal elements, “gilded, with images in the round and painted.” The church stands today, and the main retablo would have been about 15 feet wide and at least 25 feet high. Presumably the central image was of Saint Stephen. The retablo is specifically stated to have been made “by the hand of the best craftsmen of Mexico,” where “Mexico” usually meant Mexico City.

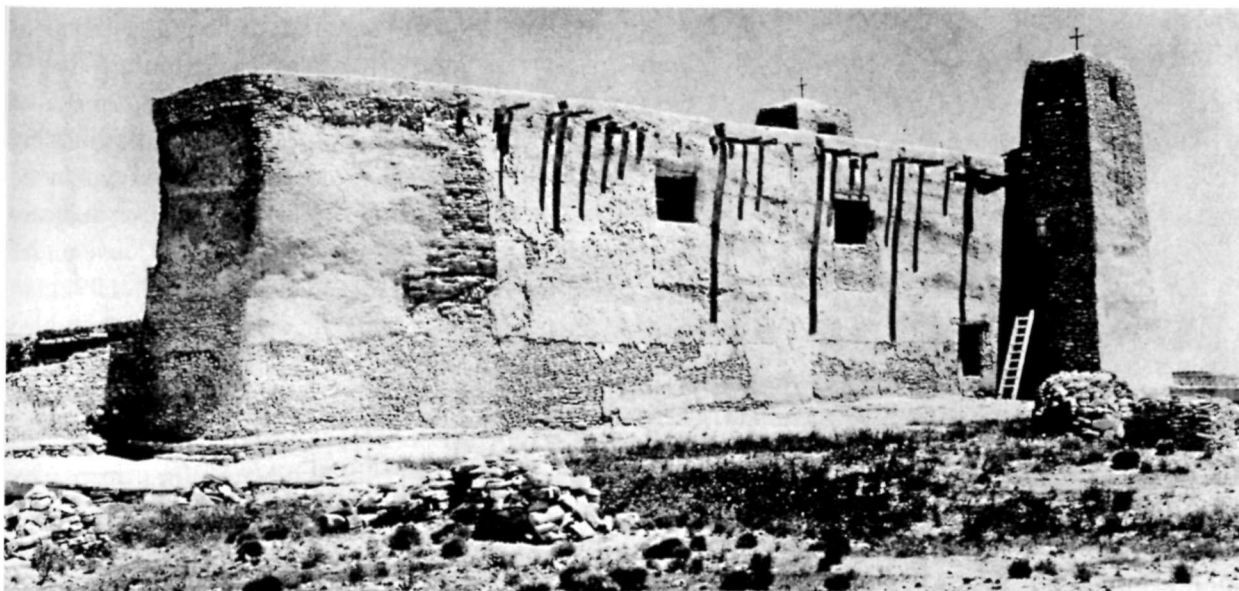


Fig. 13.3

*Acoma, the church from the southwest. Photo Laura Gilpin 1937.
From The Religious Architecture of New Mexico, George Kubler.
Courtesy University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.*

A carved Christ Crucified and several paintings on canvas are mentioned; these have no specific location, but were probably on the main retablo, and are also “from the hands of great craftsmen and brought from Mexico.” The side altars had retablos “similar to the main altar, also made in Mexico . . . both works of great skill.” One of the altars was of the Immaculate Conception, and the other of Saint Francis. The side altars at Acoma must have been placed against the nave walls at the foot of the sanctuary stairs, since there were no shoulders at the head of the nave against which such secondary altars could be placed and it is unlikely that they would have been above the stairs in the sanctuary itself (Maldonado Olasquoin in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:5).

Jémez

Archaeological evidence at a few other missions for which no inventories are available suggests that they may have had retablos installed. San José de Giusewa, in the province of Jémez, was one of the Great Churches (Ivey 1998) of New Mexico, designed in the context of the new baroque aesthetic that arrived in New Mexico about 1620 (Ivey 1998:50). The plan was worked out by fray Jerónimo Zarate Salmerón, probably in the winter of 1621–1622, and construction began in 1622; the following discussion is taken from the author’s study in preparation (Ivey n.d.). The building was unusual for New Mexico, in that it had true, or lateral, clerestory windows instead of a transverse clerestory (Bloom 1923:18).

Giusewa’s main altar had a single shelflike sotabanco of solid stone behind the main altar, extending the entire width of the back and side walls of the apse between the doors into the side chapel on the west and into the sacristy on the east. This large sotabanco indicates that Zarate Salmerón designed the church to contain a retablo 17.3 feet wide and 19.6 feet high. A large altar filled the head of the polygonal apse, with a broad flight of fired tile stairs up to it (these are the only known fired bricks made in Pre-Revolt New Mexico). The altar itself was destroyed by treasure hunters, but the solid bedrock of the sotabanco survived. The friar’s side chapel on the east opened onto the main altar, in the same manner as seen at Awatovi (below). The church was destroyed by fire as it was being



Fig. 13.4

*Giusewa, fragment of wall decoration in the church.
Courtesy State Museum of New Mexico, 1922.*

completed, about 1624 or 1625, during a series of conflicts in the Jemez Mountains. Salmerón began reconstruction soon afterward, with a minimum of redesign. At this point, Salmerón left and the building was finished and rededicated under fray Martín de Arvide about 1628. Arvide apparently chose to dedicate the church to San Diego, and it continued in use under this name until the Pueblo Revolt (Farwell 1991:34–68). As part of the renovation, side altars were added along the sides of the altar stairs; the walls of the nave and these side altars were all repainted in a new design with a different set of colors from the wall painting applied before the fire. Sections of the first decorative plaster work, weathered away from the rest of the nave, may still be in place on the walls behind the remains of

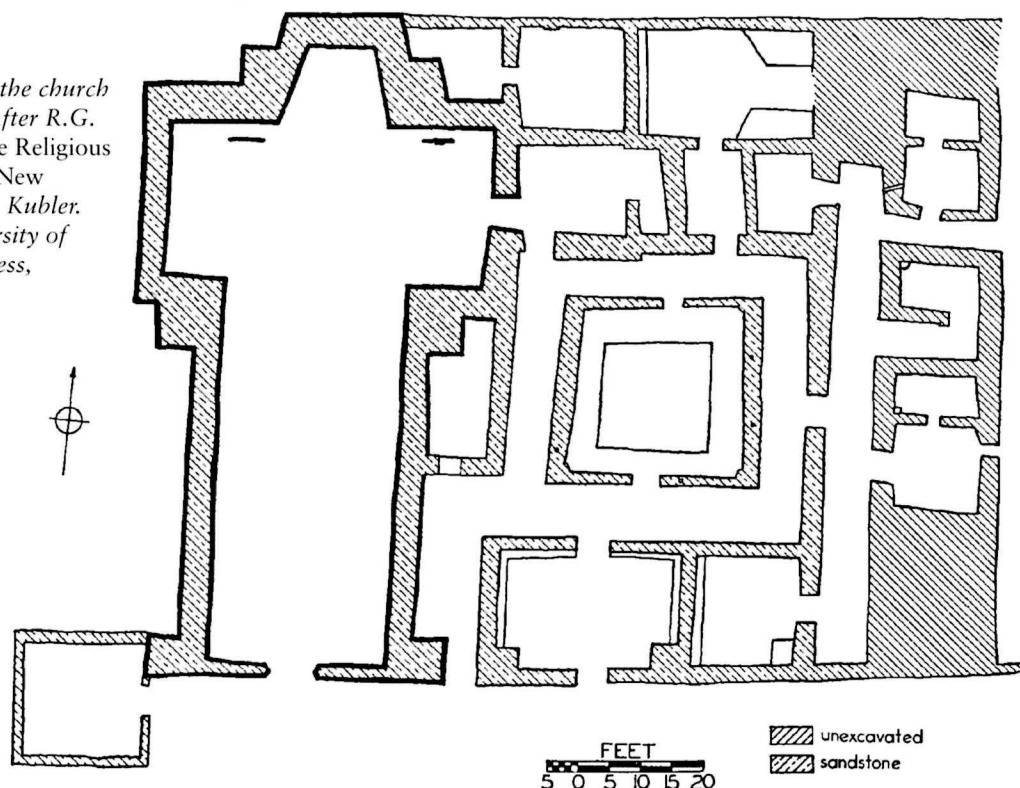
the side altars. It is possible that some fragments of the main and side altar retablos were found and not recognized: John Blanke, who conducted some of the excavation inside the church, stated that he saw pieces of wood “on the steps and on the side altars” but that they “could not be identified as to particular use” (Blanke 1922:28; Ivey n.d.).

Quarai

The mission at Quarai was established about 1626 at one of the pueblos of the Southern Tiwa province in the Salinas jurisdiction; the church and convento were designed and built by fray Juan Gutierrez de la Chica using the same Great Church approach as seen in other post-1620 churches in New Mexico. Earlier missions to Tajique and Chililí, in the same province, were built before the arrival of the baroque influence in New Mexico, and were much smaller, more simple structures than Quarai. The floor of the church was paved with carefully shaped flagstones, most rectangular with rounded corners. These paving stones did not cover the areas in front of the main and side altars; here, the outline of the altar platforms in front of the side altars and the main altar stairs between them can be seen in the photographs taken by archaeologists soon after the floor was cleared. The side altars of Quarai, although badly damaged, were clearly masonry boxes filled with packed clay. As at most other places, the main altar and its platform were destroyed by treasure hunters, who also hacked a large hole through the apse wall behind the main altar. Only traces of the first three steps of the main altar stairs were found. Before modern repairs to the building resulted in their being filled, several sockets in the masonry of the apse were visible. At the mouth of the apse, two such sockets appear, one on each side of the apse opening and at the same height. These were the sockets for the upper rails of the balustrades that formed a stair bannister very much like that at Hawikuh (below). In the back wall of the apse, which is about 10 feet wide, two more sockets were visible, again at the same height and symmetrically placed. They were too high to have been the ends of the beams forming the side edges of the altar platform; instead, they probably were the locations of beams set into the wall to help support the main altar retablo, at about 4 feet above the altar platform, or about even with the top of the altar. Altar platform beam sockets may have been located at a lower level in this wall, but the treasure hunters damaged the likely area, and no traces of such sockets survived. Higher up in the apse there were beams set into the walls whose only apparent purpose was to be the mounting points for a retablo. The beams were approximately 24½ feet above the altar platform, or about 21½ feet above the probable height of the top of the altar. If the Franciscan at Quarai was able to order a retablo to

be made for the church, he would have asked for a retablo about 10 feet wide and up to about 21 or 22 feet high. The altar platform probably had a sotabanco of wood behind the altar on which the retablo would have rested, since no trace of a masonry shelf appears on any of the photographs taken before reconstruction of this area. However, vandalism in the area was severe—the excavations of Governor Marín in the 1750s, and later treasure-hunting, would have destroyed any evidence for a sotabanco along with the rest of the structural details of the altar. There is no evidence for mounting beams inset above the side altars, so any retablos designed for these altars, unsecured at their tops, would not have been as tall as the main altar retablo (Ivey 1988:111–155).

Fig. 13.5
Quarai, plan of the church
and convento. After R.G.
Fisher. From The Religious
Architecture of New
Mexico, George Kubler.
Courtesy University of
New Mexico Press,
Albuquerque.



Abó

Fray Francisco Fonte designed and began San Estevan de Abó, the first mission to the Tompiro province in the Salinas jurisdiction, in 1622. Fray Francisco Acevedo redesigned and considerably enlarged the church and convento beginning about 1645. As rebuilt by Acevedo, Abó's altar was a fairly elaborate structure, but again, treasure hunters destroyed the majority of the information. The side altar platforms were formed by a single beam that extended across the entire width of the sanctuary; this beam also formed the front of the first step of the main altar stairs. An approximation of the height of the main altar platform, and therefore the height of the top of the main altar in the apse, can be estimated from the location of the first step relative to the altar platform retaining wall, indicating that Abó would have required a retablo 10 feet wide and perhaps 27½ feet high. All traces of the main altar itself were destroyed. Each side altar table was remodeled after its construction to add about a foot of depth to its front. The changes to the side altars suggest that the same sort of changes to the main altar occurred here as at Awatovi and Hawikuh, described below. It is possible



Fig. 13.6

*Abó, the church from the southwest. Photo Laura Gilpin, 1937.
From The Religious Architecture of New Mexico, George Kubler.
Courtesy University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.*

that a painted plaster surface decoration survives on the original surface of each side altar. A second pair of side altars was located on the sides of the church, in the areas usually called the “transepts.” These were actually side chapels behind wooden screens or altar railings from 4 to 7 feet high, which continued the line of the nave walls and therefore formed something like “cryptocollateral” chapels. These, too, had altar platforms raised six or seven inches above the floor of the nave, and probably some sort of retablo painted on the wall or made of wood and standing against the wall. Each chapel had a low roof about 13½ feet above its floor, formed by the side balconies or tribunes at this level (Ivey 1988:55–110).

In Acevedo’s redesigned version of the sacristy in the late 1640s, two beams extended across the width of the room, one against the north wall and one 5 feet south of the wall. These beams formed an altar platform and indicate the presence of a wooden altar table and probably a wall retablo in the Abó sacristy similar to that found in the Hawikuh sacristy. Joseph Toulouse, who excavated the ruins of the mission of Abó, found fragments of the retablo or some other highly decorated fragment of church furnishings in one of the sacristy storerooms. These were a number of decayed fragments of carved wood painted in white enamel with gold and green trim, and many cut pieces of mica cemented by means of plaster of paris to oddly shaped pieces of gypsum. These may well be broken and decayed pieces from a retablo at Abó, removed from above the altar when the church was abandoned in 1673 and stored in a back room in a futile attempt to protect it (Toulouse 1949:23–24; Ivey 1988:211–212).

Pecos

Jean Pinkley, while excavating the standing church at Pecos, found the foundations of the huge primary church beneath it—this was another of the Great Churches of New Mexico. Her work revealed the plan of the church, including its sanctuary, apse, side chapel, and sacristy, but virtually nothing of its altar layout and construction (Hayes 1974:xiii–xiv). However, a few documentary references give us some information. The church was designed by Pedro Ortega in 1620 and completed by Andrés Juárez at the end of 1625. The church was a continuous-nave design—that is, it had no side aisles, cryptocollateral chapels, or transepts creating deviations from the single line of its nave (the phrase usually used in the Southwest is “hall church,” but this already has a usage as the name of a variety of three-aisled gothic church). The apparent transepts are actually the sacristy and side chapel, as at San José de Giusewa. The nave was 133 feet long on the interior to the mouth of the apse, and 40 feet wide, with the roof about 40 feet above the floor. When archaeological excavation uncovered the foundations of the building in 1968, no trace of a main altar platform or altar stairs was visible in the apse, nor was there any indication of side altars; the apse itself was 12 feet deep, and its back wall above where the altar would have been located was 14 feet wide. Juárez asked the viceroy to donate “an altar piece featuring the Blessed Virgin of the Angels, advocate of this pueblo” to the church. There is, however, no confirmation that such a contribution ever occurred. The room south of the sanctuary was probably the sacristy, with a possible friar’s chapel next to it. North of the apse was a side chapel; Juárez mentioned that this chapel was dedicated to the Niño Jesus, and he requested “a Child Jesus to place above the chapel which was built for that purpose,” probably as part of a wall retablo here (Kessell 1979:122).

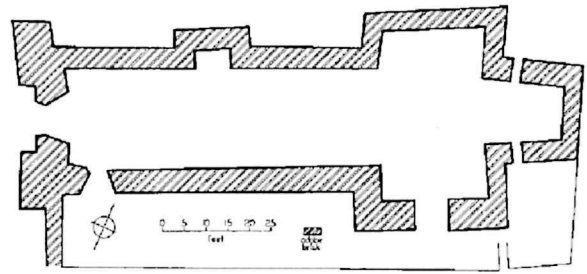


Fig. 13.7

Pecos, plan of the church. After data furnished by William Witkind. From The Religious Architecture of New Mexico, George Kubler. Courtesy University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Awatovi

San Bernardo de Awatovi was probably designed and built by fray Francisco Porras beginning in 1629. The first construction was of an early version of “Church 2,” its sacristy, and a small friary that later became the “office building.” Probably about 1631, during the burst of optimism that accompanied the increase of friars and the establishment of the supplies and shipping contract set up that year, “Church 1” was begun, but Porras died in 1633 while the foundations were still being finished. One of his successors, probably fray Francisco de Buenaventura, abandoned the construction project and instead converted the existing small church into a somewhat more developed building with the addition of towers and a change in facade. About the same time, the full-sized convento was built onto the west side of the original friary. After 1640, rooms were added to the front of the church and made into the baptistry and a side chapel. The sanctuary area and the sacristy were both remodeled several times, and the arrangement of altars changed. The mission may have been reduced to a visita from about 1662 to perhaps 1675. So far as can be determined from the available information, the church was demolished, not burned, during the Revolt of 1680, and the convento was simply taken over as an apartment complex by the Hopi. (This is the author’s interpretation of the construction sequence of Awatovi, differing considerably from that of Montgomery et al. 1949:127–129.)

The mission was excavated by Watson Smith and John O. Brew of the Peabody Museum from 1935 to 1939. As at Hawikuh, Spanish artifacts were mentioned only briefly in the report, and a good

deal more information on the sanctuary and sacristy furnishings might be found in the artifact and excavation photograph collections at the Peabody. However, because the church was apparently not burned during the Revolt of 1680, no charred material was found (Montgomery et al. 1949:54).

The altar area was changed a number of times. Fragments of adobe bricks with plaster and paint on one surface were found in the fill of later altars, indicating that the original altar of painted adobe bricks was changed during the construction of the first extant altar; this change probably happened with the first major renovation of the building after the death of Porras in 1633, with the associated abandonment of the construction of "Church 1." The earliest available version of the main altar had a flat shelf behind it that could have supported a retablo. When the altar was again remodeled, two benchlike structures of adobe were added to the top of this shelf, with a space between them at the center of the surface behind the altar. The two side structures survived to a height of 1.8 feet above the altar, but when complete stood somewhat higher. A retablo for this altar would have been 10½ feet wide, and 12½ feet high above the top of the altar. The adobe benches atop the back of the altar were clearly designed to be the bancos of such a retablo, and the adobe shelf beneath them would have been the sotabanco. The designers intended that the main structure of the retablo would rest on the adobe benches and cover some part of the back wall of the apse behind the altar. The space in the bench was probably intended for a wooden caja in which a statue of St. Bernard would have been placed; the caja would have been about 2 feet across.

Some traces of what may have been a retablo were found. A few, undescribed fragments of a possible altar screen may have been seen during the investigation: the excavators "found no remnant of the altar furnishings although a few small pieces of carved and painted wood in the fill of the sanctuary had perhaps been part of the reredos." Several pieces of selenite were found on top of the altar, and Brew thought they might have fallen from this possible retablo (Montgomery et al. 1949:62, 65).

The excavators found "a considerable quantity of selenite" on the first step of the main altar stairs and on the floor of the nave in front of it. Brew concluded that this selenite had been used to form decorative patterns on the front of the altar steps, as was seen later at Hawikuh, rather than a possible clerestory window (Montgomery et al. 1949:61).

During the first period after the redesign of ca. 1633, Awatovi had a small priest's chapel in the sacristy, but this was eventually converted to a side chapel opening onto the main altar, as at Giusewa. The side altars at Awatovi were added later (Montgomery et al. 1949:63–65). They look very similar in design and placement to the side altars at Giusewa, which also appear to have been added sometime after the original construction of the church. In both cases, the side altars were built on the stairs to the sanctuary.

Chililí

La Natividad de Nuestra Señora de Chililí was a visita of Tajique in 1672, although it had originally been established as the first mission to the Tiwa province of the Salinas district in 1613. Chililí's main altar decorations consisted of four paintings on canvas, with no figures in the round and no specific mention of a retablo. Taking the description literally, the inventory assesses nothing more than a wall retablo, where the wall itself served as the supporting structure. Such paintings hanging in the church could be quite large. The shipping records, for example, list a set of five oil paintings sent to the missions in 1624, each of which was 7 feet high and 5½ feet wide, with a gilded and ornamented frame (*Contaduría* 1624:329–330). The inventory mentioned pieces of mica that may have been used to decorate the stairs to the main altar, or the wall above the altar, or both; the general impression given by the description is of a wall retablo decorated with patterns formed by bits of mica, with framed paintings on canvas hanging in the appropriate places (Gomes de la Cadena in *Archivo*

Franciscano 1672:1v).

The side altars, however, both had *retablos de pincel* (literally, retablos by a painter) imported from Mexico, but no other accoutrements such as paintings or statues (Gomes de la Cadena in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:1v). The phrase might refer to a standard retablo, covered with gold leaf and painted, or a cheaper retablo painted so as to look gilded. It seems unlikely that the church would keep a wall retablo over the main altar while placing two imported wooden retablos over the side altars; these may have been simply the image of a retablo painted on canvas and placed above the side altars—in 1776, fray Atanasio Dominguez referred to such a retablo as a “corateral de perspectiva en lienso” (1776:70v–71, 78v).

Tajique

The inventories of the other missions speak of the main and side altars and the paintings and images associated with them in the same general terms as the arrangements on the main altar at Chililí; as at Chililí, accepting the inventories at face value gives us simple wall retablos at all these missions. For example, in the church of San Miguel de Tajique in 1672, the area over the main altar had a statue of San Miguel just over 4 feet high as its main piece. This statue was undoubtedly located above the center of the altar, in its own niche or caja, and surrounding it were “painted images.” This phrase, used repeatedly in the inventories, could refer to flat paintings on canvas or board, painted bas-relief panels, or even painted statues in the round. This paper will assume that when no other specification is made, the inventory meant framed canvas paintings. The “pedestal of the main altar,” the top of the sotabanco behind the altar table itself, had many “relics,” or mementos associated with particular saints. The side altars both had “painted works,” and distributed between the two were six carved images, either in the round or bas-relief, of the Virgin and the baby Jesus. The description specifies that the area was decorated with pieces of mica and paintings on copper. As at Chililí, the pieces of mica were probably affixed to the wall retablo; the copper paintings may have been hanging on the nave walls adjacent to the sanctuary (Gomes de la Cadena in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:1–1v).

Socorro

The mission of Nuestra Señora de Socorro also apparently had only wall retablos above its altars. The main altar had a life-sized Christ Crucified *de Michoacan*, that is, made of cornstalk paste, as its central piece. Probably above the crucifix was an oil painting of Nuestra Señora de Socorro 11 feet across. Also located on the wall retablo was a baby Jesus 2 feet long. The right side altar had a wall retablo featuring an oil painting of the Assumption of Joseph, 7 feet across, and a copper painting of the Virgin del Populo with a canopy of taffeta. The left side altar had a painting of the *Ecce Homo*, 5½ feet across, and an image in the round of Nuestra Señora 2 feet high, standing on a gilded pedestal and wearing cloth vestments and an imperial crown of silver (Velasco in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:10–11).

Zuñi

Fray Juan Galdo, who wrote the brief inventory for both Halona and Hawikuh in the Zuñi province, said of Nuestra Señora de la Pura y Linpia Concepción de Halona (in 1663–1666, called Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria de Halona) that its main altar had a statue of the Virgin, probably of Our Lady of Candelaria or the Immaculate Conception, with vestments of cloth and a crown of silver, as the central figure. The rest of the altar and the side altars were decorated with “images,” probably flat paintings (Galdo in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:12).

Purificación de Hawikuh (in 1663–1666, called La Purísima Concepción de Hawikuh) was designed and built by an unknown friar, but undoubtedly the same person who built the church at



Fig. 13.8

*Halona (Zuñi pueblo), plan of the pueblo and church. After Mindeleff, 1891.
From The Religious Architecture of New Mexico, George Kubler.
Courtesy University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.*

Halona, present-day Zuñi, about 1642. The churches and conventos of Halona and Hawikuh were virtually identical in plan, the only significant difference being that Hawikuh was about 5% smaller (see the plans of the churches in Caywood 1972:fig. 1 and Smith et al. 1966:fig. 20). Although it had been a residence mission from the time of its reconstruction around 1642, Hawikuh had become a visita of Juan Galdo at Halona in 1671. Describing the church at Hawikuh, Galdo said that the central image above the main altar was a statue of the Immaculate Conception, and the remainder of the main and side altars were “well-adorned with canvases,” clearly indicating that the side altars had no statues or carvings (in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:12v). This church was destroyed by fire only eighteen days after this inventory, on October 7, 1672 (Ivey 1994:80, n. 20).

Frederick Hodge’s excavations in 1917 to 1923 found the charred remains of the woodwork of the altar area and of the sacristy. The church and convento were excavated by Jesse Nusbaum, whose field notes were used by Smith and the Woodburys to reconstruct the details of what was found here (1966:116). Unfortunately, only a few of the most substantial fragments of carbonized wood were discussed in the published report. In the church, these included the wooden risers to the altar platforms, both of the main altar and of the side altars; the wooden risers to the main altar stairs; and the newel posts for the lower ends of the stair bannisters, with square tenons set into mortises in the ends of the lowest stair riser beam (both newel posts show the square mortises for the ends of the upper and lower bannister rails). The bases of the upper newel posts for the bannisters were found tenoned into the ends of beams set into the side walls of the apse at the front edge of the altar platform. Traces of sockets in the surviving wall of the apse indicate that the bannister rails also extended from the upper newel posts over to the walls. Other large chunks of charred wood were found on the nave floor near the main altar stairs (Smith et al. 1966:plates 17a, 19c, d). The carved statue of the Immaculate Conception, described in the 1672 inventory, was probably in its caja over the main altar at the time the church was destroyed. The large burned object found at the foot of the altar stairs may

be the remains of this figure. The remainder of the wall retablo decorations, primarily paintings on canvas, apparently burned completely. The side altars had no space behind the altar, and no solid sotabanco. The inventory indicates that the specific saint to whom the altar was dedicated was featured in a central painting, with other, smaller canvases arranged around it; again, nothing appears to have survived.

Pieces of selenite were found set into the front of the altar stairs and arranged in diamond-shaped patterns (Smith et al. 1966:107). Fragments of selenite found on the remains of the stairs of other mission churches had probably been arranged in a similar way.

Missing from the published report is any reference to the charred remains of roofing vigas, corbels, or the choir loft beams, corbels, and railings, although the floor of the church must have been thickly covered with a massive deposit of such remains. Fragments of all these structures may have been found in the rubble but not reported.

In the priest's chapel next to the sacristy was a beam set onto the back edge of the altar platform, and sockets in the back wall of the room; traces of a framework of other wooden beams are mentioned but not illustrated. Some of these structural elements were undoubtedly part of the base and supporting system for the wooden chapel altar table, like that built at Abó during the remodeling of the 1640s, discussed above. No such chapel or associated altar is mentioned in the available inventory.

In the small storeroom next to the priest's chapel, Nusbaum found three charred posts, carved or lathe-turned and of identical shape, and a number of other smaller pieces of burned wood. The burned posts could be part of a railing from elsewhere in the convento or church, or they could be the legs of a table (Smith et al. 1966:114, plate 19c). In the main sacristy, Nusbaum found “many pieces of charcoal . . . their shapes and sizes suggesting the presence of a considerable quantity of carved furniture” (Smith et al. 1966:113). In the photograph of the altar area, several large charred wood fragments, probably of this mass of burned furniture, are lying on the top of the wall between the church and the sacristy, presumably placed there during the excavation; these are not mentioned in the discussion (Smith et al. 1966:plate 17a). Most of the material undoubtedly represents the remains of the standard large cabinet with drawers in which many of the vestments were stored. For example, at Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del Paso del Norte in 1668, the “sacristy has . . . a very suitable closet for sacristy utensils. This closet has a handsome chest of drawers of fourteen divisions, as elaborate as if it had been made in Mexico City [indicating that it had been made elsewhere, undoubtedly in New Mexico], in which are kept the censer, manita, silver spoon, plate and wine vessels of the same material, [followed by a list of a number of vestments also kept in this chest] . . .” (Scholes 1929:198–199).

It is clear that the archaeological report supplies little information about the wall retablo over the main altar at Hawikuh. Smith and the Woodburys repeat several times that items of Spanish association are not discussed in the published report, and were only sparsely mentioned in the notes. Many of the Spanish artifacts have yet to be examined, perhaps including some of the charred items. These fragments could add further detail about the decoration of the main and side altars at Hawikuh. A large number of photographs of the church and convento taken during excavation could also add information about the furnishings and woodwork of the church and convento. Examination of the files and collections of the Hawikuh expedition would undoubtedly reveal a great deal of new information about the furnishings of this church.

Oraibi

At San Miguel de Oraibi in the Hopi province, the main altar retablo was dedicated to San Miguel, and presumably one of the “many wonderful images both in the round and painted” was the central statue of this saint, with other statues and paintings surrounding it above the altar. One of the two

side altars was dedicated to the Mother of God of the Immaculate Conception, and the other to San Antonio; both had “images of great perfection and with many decorations . . .” (Ezpeletta in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:17). In 1641, the province of Hopi had two other residence missions: Awatovi, which also administered Walpi, and Shongopavi, with Moxainavi as its visita (Scholes 1929:49). By 1666, the Hopi had only two residence missions: Oraibi, administering a visita as well as Moxainavi and its visita, and Shongopavi, with its visita (Scholes 1929:56). The visitas were Awatovi, Walpi, and a new one called San José de los Coconinas, although the documents do not indicate which visita was administered by which mission. In 1672, only Oraibi had a resident minister; the other five missions to the Hopi were apparently all visitas at that time (Bloom and Mitchell 1938:115).

We have Ezpeletta’s inventory for only one of Oraibi’s visitas, San Bartolomé de Shongopavi. The church had a main altar dedicated to San Bartolomé “with many skillful images, both in the round and painted.” The two side altars were called “similar”; as at Oraibi, one was dedicated to San Antonio and the other to the Mother of God, “both images of great skill, with many adornments . . .” At both Oraibi and Shongopavi, the description leaves it unclear whether the side altars had figures in the round, bas-relief, or flat paintings (Ezpeletta in *Archivo Franciscano* 1672:17–17v).

El Paso

At Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, in El Paso del Norte, the dedication document of 1668 describes the main altar as having a statue of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe as the central piece, and a painted canvas image of the same saint. The statue had flowered silk vestments and a silver crown. On the altar was also a Niño Jesus about 1 foot 4 inches high, a statue of Saint Francis, and “other little paintings, landscapes, and reliquaries.” One side altar had as its central figure a carved statue of the Immaculate Conception and a painting on canvas of St. Anthony, and, again, “landscapes.” On the other side altar was a “large and beautiful canvas of our Father St. Anthony . . .” (Scholes 1929:198–199).

Las Humanas

Evidence for an altarpiece somewhat more elaborate than a wall retablo but still not a full, imported wooden retablo was found at San Buenaventura I at the pueblo of Las Humanas in the Tompiro province of the Salinas jurisdiction (and called “San Isidro” in early studies). The building was designed and construction begun by fray Francisco Letrado, probably about 1630. By the time Letrado left, around autumn 1631, the walls had been constructed to a height of no more than 13 feet. Probably in 1634, Las Humanas was reduced to visita status, and fray Francisco Acevedo of Abó became *visitador*. Acevedo apparently completed the building and dedicated it to San Buenaventura sometime in 1635; it served as the church throughout the existence of the mission (Vivian 1979:60–83; see also Ivey 1988:165–167, 177).

San Buenaventura I, as completed, had a simple main and side altar design, similar to the layout at other temporary missions. No separate room for a sacristy was built; because San Buenaventura I was completed as a visita, the sacristy was reduced to a utilitarian font and table against the south wall, directly in front of the southern side altar, and the residential rooms added to the pueblo roomblock just to the north were undoubtedly used as a vesting sacristy and overnight residence, if necessary. The mission was again raised to a residential establishment in 1659, but the sacristy was never improved.

The excavation of San Buenaventura found traces of a retablo design on painted plaster mounted on a wicker or twig armature above the side altars. All traces of the main altar were destroyed by treasure hunters, but it may have had a similar temporary retablo, or perhaps a full retablo shipped from Mexico City. The building was destroyed in an Apache raid in September 1670, and the mission was abandoned within the next few months (Ivey 1988:176).

CONCLUSION

This review of the documentary and archaeological evidence demonstrates that some of the seventeenth-century churches of New Mexico had large, elaborate, imported retablos and other furnishings. The inventories imply that as many as six or eight of these missions had such retablos, made in Mexico City by the same masters that made them for other churches of the period in Mexico. The seventeenth-century churches of New Mexico are usually depicted as plain buildings with primitive interior provisions because they were located on a distant, poverty-stricken frontier; it is apparent that, instead, some of them could rival many of their contemporaries in other parts of New Spain in all aspects except carved stone decoration on the walls and facade.

Other churches in the Pre-Revolt province of New Mexico may have had painted wooden retablos made in New Mexico. Certainly the Pecos Indians, and probably several other groups, were skilled enough at carpentry to be able to create retablos worthy of any church, although these locally made retablos would undoubtedly have been painted and not gilded, owing to a lack of gold leaf in the province. Such a local industry may have been the beginning of the folk retablo craftsmanship of the next century. In 1776, fray Atanasio Dominguez described 27 mission churches in use in New Mexico at the time of his visit. Of these 27 churches, five had locally made wooden retablos above their main altars; one, the Chapel of Light, had a stone retablo; one had a wooden canopy that served as a retablo; one had a retablo image painted on canvas; one had an image of a retablo painted on the wall itself; three had painted designs on the wall around paintings and statues mounted directly to the wall; thirteen used the bare apse wall as the retablo, and two, Sandia and Galisteo, were too ruined to have a main altar in the church. Clearly, the retablos made in Mexico City had decreased in popularity. It is likely that the development of the local retablo industry in New Mexico contributed to that decline; certainly, the locally made retablos were far less expensive. It seems reasonable to suppose that the six or eight imported retablos on display in the churches of New Mexico in the seventeenth century inspired a local industry to replicate and install similar, locally made retablos in those New Mexico churches without them, and that this industry was revived and reached new levels of popularity upon the return of the missionaries in 1692.

The importation via the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro of gilded retablos made in Mexico City, then, considerably influenced the local ideal of how the interior of a mission should look, and derivations of this ideal influenced the appearance of the interior of New Mexico churches through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, up to the present day. ♣

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Heaven on Earth

Church Furnishings in Seventeenth-Century New Mexico

Donna Pierce



Such superb churches, so strong, so large, so beautiful, and of such perfect architecture, that we could not wish for more. Inside the churches, so many (objects) and such large altar screens. . . .

WHEN THE AUGUSTINIAN FRIAR JUAN GRIJALVA wrote the above in 1624,¹ he was describing the churches of New Spain at the end of the great missionizing era in central Mexico and at the beginning of evangelization of the northern frontier in New Mexico one century after the conquest of Mexico. By this time hundreds of churches had been built and lavishly furnished throughout New Spain, and the process continued in New Mexico. Born out of both evangelical enthusiasm and Counter-Reformation philosophy, the intent had been, as in southern Catholic Europe, to construct magnificent buildings and fill them with beautiful objects as if creating a glimpse of heaven on earth.

When Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church at Wittenburg in 1517, he set in motion a chain of events that would impact the entire western world for centuries to come. Opulent religious art within the Catholic church was only one of the many tenets of Catholicism that came under criticism by the ensuing Protestant Reformation. The Counter-Reformation conference held by the Catholic church in response to the charges and threat of Protestantism, known as the Council of Trent (1545–1563), defined the direction and personality of Catholicism for the future.

One result of the Council of Trent was the reaffirmation of the role of religious imagery within the Catholic church, although it mandated that religious art must comply with official doctrine (Schroeder 1941:216–217, 484–485; Mâle 1932). In celebration of this ruling, churches all over Europe and the Americas were built anew or redecorated in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Indeed, it was in the resulting renovations and rebuildings in Rome itself that the baroque style was born. At the same time, most Protestant sects had banned the use of religious imagery, aside from the empty cross, in their churches.

In Spain and the Americas, the early post-Tridentine renovations were usually executed in the Late Renaissance/Mannerist style still popular there. For example, the church of San Lorenzo del

Escorial in the monastery/palace built by Phillip II between 1565 and 1583 is designed and decorated in this style (Kubler 1982). In Mexico, cathedrals in major cities including Mexico City, Morelia, Mérida, and Guadalajara were begun anew in this style in preparation for the ratification of the tenets of the Council of Trent during the Third Provincial Councils of 1585 (Kubler and Soria 1959; Toussaint 1967). During the course of their construction, however, the style shifted toward the baroque.

Altar screens behind altar tables had decorated churches in Spain and other areas of Europe since the Middle Ages. Although their popularity waxed and waned in other European countries, it continued unabated in Spain and the Americas throughout the next two hundred years. During this period of post-Tridentine enthusiasm, altar screens in the churches of Spain and Mexico proliferated, became monumental, and were executed in the various styles of the Late Renaissance and Mannerist periods. At this time, artists from Spain immigrated to Mexico to work on the major construction projects in the new cathedrals.

Basically two Late Renaissance/Mannerist styles were used in altar screens in Mexico in the late sixteenth century (Tovar de Teresa 1982). The earlier one can be referred to as Plateresque and is basically a holdover from the Early Renaissance style of that name popular in Spain in the second quarter of the century and used in Mexico in the third quarter of the century. The word “plateresque” derives from the word for silver (*plata*) and means “like silverwork,” referring to the distinctively Spanish use of classical motifs in a decorative and busy manner. A distinguishing characteristic of this style used frequently on facades and altar screens is the *abalaustrada* (baluster) or *candelero* (candlestick) column—a classicizing column highly articulated and decorated with carved ribbons, garlands, and cherubs. Two treatises on Renaissance art written in Spanish in the sixteenth century discuss how this column should be made, and the first, published in 1526 by Diego de Sagredo, illustrates a baluster column (Arfe y Villafana 1585; Sagredo 1526; see Tovar de Teresa 1982:38–47).

Only a few altar screens in this early style still exist in Mexico. The largest and possibly earliest extant example is the main altar screen in the Franciscan mission church of the Indian village of Cuauhtinchán, Puebla (Tovar de Teresa 1982:275–281). Dated sometime between 1560 and 1570, it has fluted Ionic columns on the first level and different types of baluster columns on the second, third, and fourth levels. The screen is three bays wide with three main levels, and the top level restricted to the center bay only. The sections consist of paintings except in the first and second levels of the center bay where a space for the tabernacle is topped by a sculpture niche. Each level is separated by a banco or entablature frieze with garlands and angels in relief. The lower banco or *predella* has bas-relief carvings of the Twelve Apostles. The outside edges are decorated with *guardapolvos*, narrow framing devices that span the space between the altar screen and the walls of the church and sometimes tilt forward at the top to protect the altar from dust.

When New Mexico was first settled in 1598 on the northern frontier of New Spain, the early Renaissance or Plateresque style would have been the most familiar style in Mexico, although it was rapidly being replaced by the later Renaissance style discussed below. Religious furniture and imagery brought to New Mexico with the Oñate expedition of 1598, the reinforcements of 1600, and subsequent supply trains for the first few decades of the seventeenth century most likely would have been executed in the Plateresque style. Shipping records for the missions indicate that two carved and gilded tabernacles for altars made by Andrés Pablo of Mexico City at the cost of 250 pesos each were sent to New Mexico in 1612.² Probably intended for the churches at Santo Domingo and Santa Fe, the only viable churches at that time, they were most likely Plateresque in style and included baluster columns.

The second Late Renaissance style employed in Mexican altar screens in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is a more classically correct and restrained style similar to that used in Spain by Juan de Herrera and his followers. Often referred to as Spanish Purist style, it is exemplified



Fig. 14.1

Main altar screen, 1586–88, Church of Huejotzingo, Puebla, Mexico. (photo by author)

by the austere design of the Escorial of Phillip II outside Madrid. In Mexico, it appears to have been introduced by the wave of immigrant artists working on the cathedrals in the 1580s and 1590s.

The earliest surviving example in Mexico in the Late Renaissance style is the large altar screen commissioned by the local Indians for the Franciscan mission church of Huejotzingo, Puebla. It was executed between 1584 and 1586 under the direction of the famous Flemish painter Simón Pereyngs, and the Spanish sculptor Pedro de Requeña (Tovar de Teresa 1982:282–315). Again, the columns are the most readily recognizable traits of this later Renaissance style with classically correct Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian columns in ascending order. However, a close look at these columns reveals that the lower third of the shaft is covered with a blanket of decorative motifs indicating both incipient baroque elements and the Spanish tendency toward unrestrained decorative detail. The Huejotzingo altar screen retains the earlier baluster columns on the two upper levels. This large screen consists of four levels and seven bays with sculpture niches flanked by columns alternating with large narrative paintings. The central bay originally contained in ascending order a large *baldachin*, or canopy covering for the tabernacle, and sculpture niche (both now lost) superseded by a bas-relief of St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata, a Calvary group (now disassembled), and a semicircular *remate* (crownpiece) with a relief of God the Father.

The next datable altar screen extant in Mexico is that in the Franciscan mission church of Xochimilco executed in 1605 (Tovar de Teresa 1982:316–345). Like the example at Huejotzingo, the screen consists of four levels and seven bays of sculpture niches alternating with narrative paintings. In this screen, the full-blown Late Renaissance style is evident and the Plateresque baluster column has disappeared. The classical columns ascend in correct order from Doric to Ionic to Corinthian, and here, to the composite column on the top level.

Aside from the columns, the iconography of most of these altar screens also occurs in ascending order—a standard element of post-Council of Trent iconographic hierarchy. Following the Tridentine edict, a hierarchical format for altar screens evolved in this period and prevailed in some degree for at least two succeeding centuries. The predella of these altar screens usually contained images, often bust-length, of the apostles in their proper position as the founders of the church, or occasionally dedicatory inscription panels. The first main level at Xochimilco includes full-length sculptures of the Latin Doctors of the Church, Saints Augustine, Gregory, Jerome, and Ambrose. At times the Four Evangelists are seen in this position or beneath the doctors. Usually the second level contains sculptures of preachers and founders of various religious orders and the third and fourth levels have various saints of choice, some from the orders, and most martyrs or ascetics. The narrative paintings usually depict scenes from the lives of Christ or the Virgin, and occasionally scenes from the lives of the saints.

As a part of the post-Tridentine pattern, the central bay or *calle* of the altar screen always contains the tabernacle with baldachin, the patron saint of the church or altar, and often an image of the Virgin and Christ. The proper position of the Virgin is usually beneath the patron saint and Christ, as intercessor between the faithful and the saints. At Xochimilco, the image of the Virgin was originally beneath the relief carving of San Bernardino, patron of the church, and the crucifix was above him; their positions have been reversed in modern times (Tovar de Teresa 1982:319).

A notable characteristic of altar screens in this Late Renaissance style is the large size of the baldachin and its design as a small Greek temple. In earlier periods they had been smaller. The baldachin of the altar screen at Xochimilco is one of few from this period to survive. Although the baldachin at Huejotzingo has been replaced, the size and shape of the space reserved for it in the screen indicate that it was similar to that at Xochimilco.

In 1624, a large octagonal baldachin of carved and gilded wood incorporating oil paintings was



Fig. 14.2
Main altar screen, 1600, Church of Xochimilco, Mexico, Mexico. (photo by author)

shipped to New Mexico from Mexico.³ Since it measured 6-3/4 x 4-3/4 feet, it was undoubtedly in the Late Renaissance style and probably incorporated full-round or half-round columns in the Late Renaissance classical style with the lower third decorated, similar to the surviving baldachin at Xochimilco.

A somewhat smaller screen in the Late Renaissance style was originally made for the main altar of the Franciscan mission church at Texcoco during the first few decades of the seventeenth century (Tovar de Teresa 1982:362–366). Now in the chapel of the Third Order, its smaller scale makes it more similar to the type of altar screens shipped to New Mexico during the same period. Smaller Late Renaissance-style altar screens from the early seventeenth century still exist as side altars in the Franciscan mission churches of Tlaxcala (dedicated to Jesus Nazareno) and Huejotzingo (those dedicated to San Miguel and San Diego) and would be comparable in size to ones shipped to New Mexico.

According to shipping records, a complete altar screen was sent to New Mexico in the mission supply train of 1625–1626.⁴ Probably intended for the recently completed Franciscan mission church at Guisewa (Jemez) or the Santa Fe parish church, it was most likely executed in the Late Renaissance style. Based on descriptions and measurements of the packing crates for this altar screen, Ivey (1993) has calculated the approximate size and format of the piece; the probable style and iconography will be discussed here.

According to Ivey (see Chapter 13), the banco or predella was composed of six panels approximately two feet square. These probably contained bas-relief carvings of bust-length apostles, as at Cuauhtinchan, Huejotzingo, and Xochimilco, as well as many other screens. In the New Mexico screen the six panels probably included two apostles each. The first level contained sections measuring approximately 5.84 x 5.15 feet. In accordance with altar screens of the era, they probably consisted of paintings on wood or canvas and possibly a bas-relief carving. They most likely depicted scenes from the lives of Christ or the Virgin. These panels flanked the central niche or *caja*, measuring 5.84 x 3.31 x 1.73 feet and containing a statue of the Virgin. Two columns in the round described in the shipping records probably flanked this sculpture niche, as seen on the altar screens at Huejotzingo and Xochimilco, among others. The columns were undoubtedly classical in style with the lower third decorated with foliage. Since they would have been on the lower level they were most likely topped with Doric or Ionic capitals.

According to Ivey, the second and third levels consisted of sections shipped in crates of the same dimensions as the crate used for the first level. The outside panels on the top possibly were curved or angled to create a cornice. These sections were most likely composed of paintings on wood or canvas, with the center one above the sculpture niche of the Virgin possibly consisting of a polychromed bas-relief of the patron saint of the particular church, as at Huejotzingo and Xochimilco. Pilasters mentioned in the shipping records divided the panels and may have been capped with Corinthian capitals since they would have terminated in the upper levels.

The shipping records also describe packing crates for shipping the guardapolvo. In this period, the guardapolvo sometimes contained small paintings on canvas. Guardapolvos still exist on the altar screen at Cuauhtinchan and on side screens at Huejotzingo and Tlaxcala. Although somewhat later in date, altar screens with guardapolvos are extant in the Franciscan mission churches at Amecameca and Ozumba, among others.

Overall the size, format, and style of the 1626 altar screen may well have been similar to side altar screens still existing in churches in Mexico, particularly that at San Francisco in Tlaxcala. Dating from the same time period, the overall format of the Tlaxcala screen is quite similar to that extrapolated by Ivey from the shipping records and crate measurements for the New Mexican

example. Both have a banco or predella supporting two main levels of three bays each and full-round columns flanking the central sculptural niche. Both have guardapolvos. Some differences exist in the details; for example, the Tlaxcala screen has three sculpture niches instead of only one, four columns rather than just two, and no pilasters. Although slightly later in date and containing later columns in the lower level, extant side altar screens at Acolman and Chiconautla are similar in format and components as well, and also provide an idea of what the 1626 altar screen in New Mexico would have looked like.

At the same time that the 1626 altar screen was being made in Mexico City and shipped to New Mexico, a major commission that would impact religious art all over Europe and the Americas was commencing in Rome. As part of the post-Council of Trent artistic rejuvenation in Rome, a major renovation of St. Peter's was undertaken in the late sixteenth century. By the early seventeenth century, the renovations had reached the stage for the commission of a new main baldachin for the church. Italian sculptor Gianlorenzo Bernini was commissioned for the project and between 1624 and 1633 constructed a mammoth baldachin in the new baroque style, incorporating large twisted columns.

During the Middle Ages, the columns of Solomon's temple were believed to have been twisted. Consequently, these columns are referred to as solomonic columns and had been used in the minor arts, most frequently in manuscript illustrations, during the Middle Ages. Bernini's use of them on a monumental scale in the baldachin at Rome caused them to become exceedingly popular throughout the Catholic world during the baroque era. In Spain, and particularly in Latin America, they remained popular even longer.

The solomonic column seems to have been introduced to Mexico in the main altar screen for the new Cathedral of Puebla designed by the famous Spanish artist Juan Martínez Montañés, and executed by Mexican craftsmen in the mid 1640s. The screen incorporates large carved columns executed in the Mexican substitute for marble, the local alabaster known as *tecali*. Immediately the solomonic column, most frequently executed in carved and gilded wood and often overlaid with decorative foliage, became exceedingly popular in Mexico. With the introduction of the solomonic column, the full-blown baroque style overtook Mexican religious art and imagery.⁵ The carved and gilded decoration, previously restricted to the lower third of classical columns during the Late Renaissance style, was now given free rein and frequently covered not only the entire surface of the columns, but often the surrounding

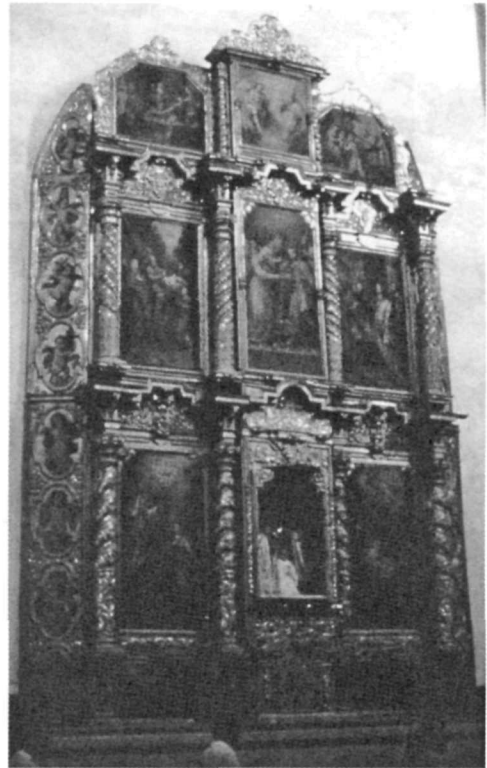


Fig. 14.3
Side altar screen, 17th c., Church of Acolman,
Mexico, Mexico. (photo by author)



Fig. 14.4
Side altar screen, 17th c., Church of
Chiconautla, Mexico, Mexico.
(photo by author)



Fig. 14.5

Baldachin by Gianlorenzo Bernini, built in 1624–33, Church of St. Peter, Rome. (photo by author)

space as well. During the transition from the Late Renaissance into the baroque, sculptures began to outnumber narrative paintings in the overall altar screen format.

In New Mexico, shipping records, archaeological evidence, and most importantly, the inventory of 1672 indicate that carved and gilded altar screens were imported throughout the seventeenth century. Although some of the evidence is vague and circumstantial, the 1672 inventory unequivocally describes three carved and gilded altar screens in the Franciscan mission church at Acoma pueblo as being made “by the hand of the best craftsmen of Mexico.”⁶ The main altar screen is described as being gilded with three *cuerpos* or horizontal levels and incorporating “images in the round,” paintings on canvas, and a statue of Christ on the Cross.

Although not specifically mentioned, the patron saint of the church at Acoma, St. Stephen, probably dominated the altar screen either as a sculpture in the round on the first level or in a narrative bas-relief carving on the second level, or both. The crucifix, following standard Counter-Reformation iconography, would have been located in the center section of the top or third level of the altar screen. Most likely, as in many altar screens of this era, bust-length apostles probably graced the predella level flanking the elegant silver gilt tabernacle described in the inventory. Paintings in the screen may have depicted scenes from the lives of St. Stephen, Christ, or the Virgin while other sculptures would have represented saints such as preachers, founders of orders, martyrs, and ascetics in the perquisite ascending order. The two side altar screens are described as “similar to the main one, also made in Mexico . . . both works of great skill” and dedicated to the Immaculate Conception and St. Francis.

Since the church at Acoma was not completed until at least 1644, it is possible that by the time these screens were commissioned, particularly if they were not requested at the same time, all or at least one of them would have been executed in the new baroque style with solomonic columns. They could easily have been similar to other small-scale altar screens surviving in churches in Mexico such as side altar screens at Acolman and Santa Maria Chiconautla or ones in the Franciscan mission churches at Ozumba, Tlalmanalco, and Amecameca, among others. Undoubtedly the overwrought carved and gilded decorative jungle so characteristic of the baroque era, particularly in Mexico, would have been present in the altar screens of the Acoma Pueblo church.



Fig. 14.6
Main altar screen, early 18th c.,
Church of Tlalmanalco, Mexico,
Mexico. (photo by author)

According to the 1672 inventory, three altar screens made in Mexico were also present in the churches of Tajique and Chililí, and they are implied for many other New Mexico churches including Socorro and Hawikuh. Archaeological evidence indicates the presence of some of these screens as well as others at Quarai and Abó (Ivey 1993).

Based on shipping records and inventories, individual paintings and sculptures were also brought to New Mexico from Mexico during the seventeenth century. For example, in 1612 the missions were shipped eight oil paintings in gilt frames by the painter Francisco Franco and in 1614 one large oil painting in gilt frame of San Antonio and San Diego by the artist Manuel de Cháves.⁷ In 1624 five large oil paintings in carved and gilded frames measuring 7 x 5-1/2 feet each were shipped to New Mexico from Mexico City.⁸ By 1672, numerous paintings are detailed in the inventory of churches, including one in the church at Socorro that measured 11 feet across.



Fig. 14.7

Sebastian Lopez de Arteaga (in Mexico 1635–52), Doubting Thomas, 1650, oil on canvas, Pinacoteca Virreinal de San Diego, Mexico City. Courtesy Metropolitan Museum, New York.

The earlier of these paintings would have been executed in the Late Renaissance/Mannerist style which in Mexico included strong Flemish influence from immigrant artists as well as engravings (Bantel and Burke 1979; Toussaint 1982). By the 1620s, the influence of the baroque styles of Europe was being felt in Mexico. During this period two baroque styles were introduced to Mexico: the dark tenebrist style exemplified in Europe in the work of the Italian artist Caravaggio, elaborated in Spain by such artists as Francisco de Zurburán and in Mexico by immigrant artists such as Sebastián López de Arteaga; and the busy compositional narrative paintings developed by Peter Paul Rubens and disseminated throughout the western world through engravings. Undoubtedly, the paintings shipped to New Mexico during the seventeenth century included examples of all of the styles current in Mexico at the time.

Aside from paintings on canvas and panel, paintings on copper are also listed in the New Mexico churches in the 1672 inventory. Small-scale paintings on copper panels were popular in the early seventeenth century, and some of the best artists in Mexico used this medium. At least one painter, fray Alonso Lopez de Herrera, may have specialized in copper paintings based on the large number that bear his signature or are attributed to him. Perhaps at least one of the paintings on copper in New Mexico in 1672 was painted by Herrera.

From the shipping records for the New Mexico supply train of 1625–1626, we know that the statue of the Virgin for the main niche of the altar screen was approximately three feet tall and stood on a pedestal about 1.73 feet high. Among the numerous sculptures mentioned in the 1672 inventory were a four-foot-tall statue of San Miguel on the main altar at Tajique and another of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception at Hawikuh. Sculptures brought to New Mexico were unquestionably executed in the *estofado* technique used in Spain and Mexico throughout the colonial period. In this elaborate process, images were carved in wood, gessoed, and with the exception of flesh areas, covered with gold leaf. The gold leaf was then painted over and etched through to reveal the gold in patterns similar to the lavish brocade fabrics of the era (see Figure 16.4). Flesh tones were achieved

through a process called *encarnación* in which the areas were repeatedly painted, varnished, and sanded to achieve a lifelike quality. The only statues that were not executed in the estofado manner in this period were those intended to be dressed in real clothing, and in some cases those as well.

Another type of sculpture present in New Mexico in 1672 was a life-size crucifix “de Michoacán” in the church at Socorro. Images of Christ on the Cross made in Michoacán were well known in Mexico. Made of cornstalk paste and orchid glue (*caña de maíz*) in a technique used by the Tarascan Indians of the Michoacán area before the conquest, these large images were made in quantity during the colonial period and shipped to churches all over Mexico and even to Spain where they were popular because of their large scale but lightweight quality.

As in Spain and Mexico, another requirement for furnishing a church was the utensils needed to celebrate the Mass, such as chalices, monstrances, ciboria, cruets, censers, and candlesticks. The silversmithing industry had been established early in colonial Mexico and was one of the first crafts to be regulated by guilds. The New Mexico shipping records for 1612 list seven silver-gilt chalices with their patens made by the Mexico City silversmith Miguel de Torres at the cost of 55.6 pesos each.⁹ Miguel de Torres Hena was a well-known silversmith active in Mexico City from 1584 to at least 1620 who served as the overseer for the guild from before 1600 to 1606, when he turned the position over to his son of the same name who served until 1620 (Esteras Martin 1992a:20, 86–88, 101; 1992b:xvii, 13–15, 108, 181). Whether the chalices destined for the New Mexican churches in 1612 were made by the father or son is unknown, but in either case they would have been commissioned from one of the best known silversmiths in Mexico at the time.

In the 1620s and 1630s, silver work in Mexico was making the transition from Late Renaissance to early baroque style and examples shipped to New Mexico during this period would have reflected this. Cabachon enamels were a common decorative motif in designs of silver objects of this period, and in some New Mexico records newly fashionable chalices with enamels are specifically identified (Scholes and Adams 1952; Ivey 1993).

Other types of church furnishings brought to New Mexico over the Camino Real and listed in shipping records, inventories, and other documents include organs, furniture, frames, vestments, brass candlesticks, copper baptismal vessels, and bronze bells. All of these would have been executed in the Late Renaissance and early baroque styles popular in Mexico during the seventeenth century. Along with the silver utensils, paintings, sculptures, and carved and gilded altar screens, they would have been combined in the adobe churches of New Mexico in an effort to create a glimpse of heaven on earth in this remote area of the northern frontier. ♣



Fig. 14.8
Manuel de Velasco, Archangel, 1685,
Cathedral of Mexico, Mexico City.
Courtesy Metropolitan Museum,
New York.

NOTES

1. Grijalva 1924:71v. Translation by the author.
2. AGI, Contaduría, legajo 714, LBB no. 59, f. 129. Also see Ivey 1993.
3. AGI, Contaduría, legajo 726, LBB no. 235, pp. 329–330.
4. AGI, Contaduría, legajo 726, LBB no. 235, pp. 351–352. For a translation see Hodge et al. 1945: Appendix IV, pp. 109–124.
5. For general discussions of the baroque in Mexico see Burke 1993; Kelemen 1967; Tovar de Teresa 1981.
6. Biblioteca Nacional de Mexico, legajo 1, document 34. This document is partially translated in Scholes and Adams 1952.
7. AGI, Contaduría, legajo 714, LBB no. 59, p. 122; legajo 717, LBB no. 186, p. 205. Also see Ivey 1993.
Although major artists from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in Mexico are well known, numerous minor artists and workshops are also recorded in various government documents. Archival research to document these artists has recently been undertaken by some scholars. To date Manuel de Cháves and Francisco Franco are unidentified, although the former could be related to the Indian painter of the late sixteenth century Gaspar Chávez and the latter may be related to the painter Alonso Franco active in Mexico City ca. 1600.
8. AGI, Contaduría, legajo 726, LBB no. 235, pp. 329–330; Ivey 1993.
9. AGI, Contaduría, legajo 714, LBB no. 59, p. 138; Ivey 1993:53.

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El Paso del Norte

New Mexico's Southern Gateway on the Camino Real

Rick Hendricks



THE EARLY YEARS

IN LATE APRIL 1598 Juan de Oñate led his colonizing expedition into what is today the southern end of the El Paso Valley. On the thirtieth Oñate formally took possession of all the territory drained by the Río del Norte, and by the first years of the seventeenth century, the New Mexico colony had firmly taken hold, with its capital far to the north, in Santa Fe. Supply caravans traveled through the pass at regular intervals, and in 1630 fray Alonso de Benavides recommended that a mission be established there. The pragmatic Franciscan thought such a mission would serve two equally useful purposes. It would minister to the Manso Indians who inhabited the region and provide a way station on the Camino Real (Timmons 1990:12–17).

More than a quarter of a century passed before Benavides's suggestion was put into effect. In 1656 two more Franciscans, Francisco Pérez and Juan Cabal, erected a church at the pass and gathered some Mansos there. Their effort was short lived; both friars abandoned the mission after two years and returned to New Spain.

The first permanent mission was established in the winter of 1659 with the founding of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Mansos by fray García de San Francisco. By 1668 a fine church, described as the most beautiful in the custody of New Mexico, was finished. Over the next decade the mission counted Hispanic colonists and Indians from such other groups as Apaches, Jumanos, and Sumas. On the eve of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, civil-military authorities in Nueva Vizcaya administered the small Hispanic community, while ecclesiastical control of El Paso lay with the custody of New Mexico.

THE NEW MEXICO COLONY-IN-EXILE

Violence and death overwhelmed Spanish colonial New Mexico on August 10, 1680, as the northern Pueblos rose in a defiant revolution, which claimed the lives of more than four hundred Hispanic colonists, twenty-one Franciscan missionaries, and an unknown number of Indians. The survivors, including almost two thousand colonists and several hundred Pueblo Indians, escaped downriver to the El Paso del Norte area by way of the Camino Real.¹

The arrival of the refugees in El Paso del Norte on October 9, 1680, swelled the local population.

Fig. 15.1
The Mission
Nuestra Señora
de Guadalupe
became a
landmark in El
Paso del Norte.
Illustration José
Cisneros, 1980.
From *El Paso: A
Borderlands
History*, W. H.
Timmons.
Courtesy Texas
Western Press,
University of
Texas at El Paso.



From October 12 to 14 Governor Antonio de Otermín and fray Francisco de Ayeta founded a string of settlements 2 leagues apart downriver from El Paso del Norte: Santísimo Sacramento, San Pedro de Alcántara, and San Lorenzo. Governor Otermín established his headquarters and the government-in-exile at the *real* of San Lorenzo, farthest from the pass, along with most of the former colonists. An attempted reconquering expedition late in 1681 failed miserably, and the following spring Otermín took steps to stabilize the situation in El Paso del Norte and gave up, for a time, any thoughts of regaining New Mexico. Leading colonists surveyed the area for weeks for more suitable sites for area communities. The governor and the colonists preferred to settle near the Guadalupe mission in mixed communities with the Indians, but fray Francisco Ayeta opposed them. Viceregal authorities in Mexico City sided with Father Ayeta and decided in 1682 that the Spaniards and Indians should live apart, with clearly delineated boundaries between them. A royal *cédula* confirmed this ruling the following year.

Governor Domingo Jironza Petrís de Cruzate replaced Otermín in August 1683. He had been given viceregal orders to hold El Paso del Norte at all costs. Henceforth, El Paso, as capital of the New Mexico colony-in-exile, was to have the status of *villa*, as had Santa Fe. Jironza was to defend the settlements downriver from El Paso del Norte. To achieve this, he planned the establishment of a

presidio between the Guadalupe mission and the real of San Lorenzo. He also ordered the relocation of the area communities closer to El Paso del Norte. About 1 league below the villa, they relocated the real of San Lorenzo. To the southwest and downriver were the predominately Indian pueblos of San Antonio de Senecú de los Piro, Corpus Christi de la Ysleta de los Tiguas, and Nuestra Señora de la Concepción de Socorro de los Piro, which took their names from the abandoned pueblos upriver.

In September 1684 Jironza ordered a census of the colony of New Mexico refugees. In El Paso del Norte there were 53 households made up of 499 people; at San Lorenzo, 36 households and about 354 people; and at Ysleta, 21 households with 198 people, for a total non-Indian population of 1,051.

Pedro Reneros de Posada replaced Jironza in September 1686. Reneros governed ineffectively during his two-and-a-half-year terms, failing utterly to remedy the problems confronting the refugee colony.

Jironza returned for a second term in February 1689. Departing El Paso del Norte on August 10, 1689—exactly nine years after the Pueblo Revolt—he led an expedition upriver as far as Zia Pueblo. After a day-long battle on August 29, Zia was in ashes, and more than six hundred defenders had perished and about seventy had been captured.

Fig. 15.2

El Paso settlements. Map drawn by Jerry L. Livingston. From *By Force of Arms, The Journals of don Diego de Vargas, New Mexico 1691–93*, John L. Kessell and Rick Hendricks, editors, 1992. Courtesy University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.



Despite this triumph, Governor Jironza still longed to reconquer all of New Mexico, a feat he had not achieved during his first term. A second entrada planned for May 1690 had to be canceled. Reinforcements were required in Casas Grandes, draining needed manpower from El Paso del Norte. Mansos, Sumas, and other Indian groups threatened rebellion. Jironza had to take troops on campaign in October 1690 to confront a gathering of Indian nations bent on the destruction of El Paso del Norte and its neighboring settlements.

Governor Jironza never got the opportunity to reconquer New Mexico. That honor fell to his successor. On February 22, 1691, Diego de Vargas acceded to office in El Paso del Norte, which served as the staging area for Vargas's largely ceremonial reconquest of New Mexico in 1692.

DIEGO DE VARGAS AND THE RECOLONIZATION OF NEW MEXICO

That December and in January 1693, Vargas conducted a census of the residents of the El Paso area in order to determine how many potential colonists were on hand. In the communities stretching down the Camino Real from El Paso to San Lorenzo, Ysleta, and Socorro, there were 959 individuals in 112 households consisting of 73 married couples; 115 widows, widowers, and single men; 448 boys and girls; and 250 servants. Almost all were survivors of the 1680 Pueblo Revolt or the twelve years of life in exile in El Paso.

On the feast of St. Francis, October 4, 1693, the recolonizing expedition set out from El Paso del Norte. Vargas noted that it numbered

more than seventy families, among whom were many widows and single men and women. There were more than eight hundred people of all ages who will go, children as well as servants. To all these some Indians, whose love of their land and relatives is their incentive, must be added. Most of these people went in the twelve wagons I hired in Parral and on the mules and horses. Others helped themselves by going in the few carts they had.

Individuals representing more than fifty Pre-Revolt families were listed among the 1693 colonists and made up a clear majority. At the same time at least thirty families left some members or remained in one of the communities in the jurisdiction of El Paso del Norte, leaving a population that probably numbered fewer than two hundred souls after Vargas and the rest of the expedition departed (Kessell et al. 1995:17–18).

EL PASO DEL NORTE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Little is known of life in El Paso del Norte after Vargas's departure until the opening decade of the eighteenth century, but it is clear that one fundamental change had occurred. The area was now governed by both civil-military and ecclesiastical authorities in distant Santa Fe who delegated authority to local officials. Nueva Vizcaya had finally lost its protracted struggle for control over secular matters as far north as the banks of the Río Grande, and authority had been delivered into the hands of the governor of New Mexico.

After Vargas's return and throughout the remainder of the colonial period, many of the most influential positions in the Paso del Norte jurisdiction went to peninsular Spaniards or criollos who traced their roots to communities in northern Spain (Hendricks 1993:58, 60–61). A more detailed examination of the lives of two of these individuals, Antonio Valverde Cosío and Manuel Antonio San Juan, makes it possible to improve our understanding of the communities and the society that developed in the El Paso del Norte region in the eighteenth century.

Antonio de Valverde Cosío

During initial decades of the eighteenth century—for almost thirty years—Gen. Antonio de Valverde Cosío dominated the scene in El Paso del Norte. Valverde, a native of Villapresente in the Spanish province of Santander, had arrived in New Mexico with Vargas in 1693, having been recruited in Sombrerete, where he was a minor merchant. In 1700 he won viceregal approval as captain of the presidio of El Paso del Norte for life. He also served as *alcalde mayor* of the district (Kessell and Hendricks 1992:542, n. 1).

In 1716 Valverde Cosío received an appointment as interim governor of New Mexico. Two years later he was given the title outright. After he finished his five-year term in 1721, he returned to the post of captain of the presidio. Seriously ill by mid-1722, Valverde Cosío traveled to Mexico City for treatment. He was back at El Paso del Norte by spring of 1726.

As travelers moved over the Camino Real north from Chihuahua, they encountered a fork at the Ojo de Samalayuca. While the main road continued due north to El Paso del Norte, a spur turned northeast to the Río Grande and then followed the west bank of the river to the villa. As the branch line made its way northwest along the river it passed through some of the finest agricultural property in the Paso del Norte area. Centered on the opposite bank of the Río Grande lay what was doubtless the largest agricultural complex in colonial New Mexico at the time, the Hacienda de San Antonio de Padua. Valverde Cosío had obtained the land, measuring some 20,000 hectares, from *maestre de campo* Luis Granillo. The hacienda and related properties were valued at more than 40,000 pesos (Hendricks 1994b; Gudiño Quiroz 1994).

While the hacienda emphasized the production of wheat and had its own grist mill on the property, it also had 10,000 to 12,000 vines which produced grapes for wine and brandy. By the 1720s vineyards had been established in the region of El Paso del Norte for more than a half century. Franciscans had planted *Vitis vinifera*, which came to be known as the “mission grape” at the Guadalupe mission as early as the 1650s to ensure a supply of sacramental wine; muscatel grapes were subsequently grown as well. At the time of the church’s dedication, it was described as being surrounded by vineyards. With the arrival of the Pueblo Revolt survivors, the local irrigation system was rapidly expanded, which permitted expansion of vineyards in El Paso del Norte and the communities stretching south down the valley. Over time El Paso del Norte became renowned for the production of excellent wine and related products, including brandy, raisins, and vinegar. By the 1750s officials inventoried more than 250,000 vines in cultivation by more than a hundred producers, large and small, throughout the El Paso valley. All of these products were shipped in considerable volume over the Camino Real, north to Santa Fe and south to Chihuahua (Morrow 1984:8–11; Orndorff 1960:143–144; Timmons 1990:27–29).

In addition to owning the wheat farm—the Hacienda de San Antonio proper—Valverde Cosío had holdings dedicated to a variety of agricultural activities. An operation centered around a compound called Santa Rosa served as the headquarters for shepherds herding 18,000 to 19,000 head of *ganado menor*, in this case mostly sheep and goats. An *obraje* located on the hacienda processed wool. On the west side of the Río Grande, a ranch called Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe raised cattle and horses. In the villa of El Paso del Norte, Valverde Cosío had a 27-room, three-story house, complete with stairways and balconies. On the grounds was an orchard with 3,000 to 4,000 vines and fruit trees, including two varieties of apples and peaches. El Paso del Norte was well known for its fruit; in addition to the grapes, peaches, apples in Valverde Cosío’s town home, the area produced excellent pears, apricots, and quinces in abundant quantities (Hendricks 1994b:118).

When Antonio de Valverde Cosío died in 1728, control of the Hacienda de San Antonio passed to his daughter, Antonia de Valverde, and her husband, José Valentín de Aganza. Together they tried

to keep the operation going.

In the year following her father's death, doña Antonia and her husband saw Hacienda de San Antonio transport the following products down the Camino Real to Chihuahua:

140 quintales 3 arrobas 22 libras of wheat flour: 701 pesos 1 tomín
 48 fanegas 4 almudes of maize: 491 pesos 4 tomines
 34 fanegas of beans 221 pesos
 30 fanegas of beans 180 pesos
 135 quintales 21 libras de harina 680 pesos 3 reales
 96 fanegas 4 almudes de maíz 578 pesos
 184 fanegas de maíz 1,288 pesos
 Total of 4,068 pesos (Hendricks 1994b:120)

A measure of the level of economic activity generated by the agriculturists in El Paso del Norte in relation to the rest of New Mexico can be seen in the tithe records for the period (Figure 15.3). Much of the area's wealth derived from the Hacienda de San Antonio and a few other enterprises that may have been similar in scale.

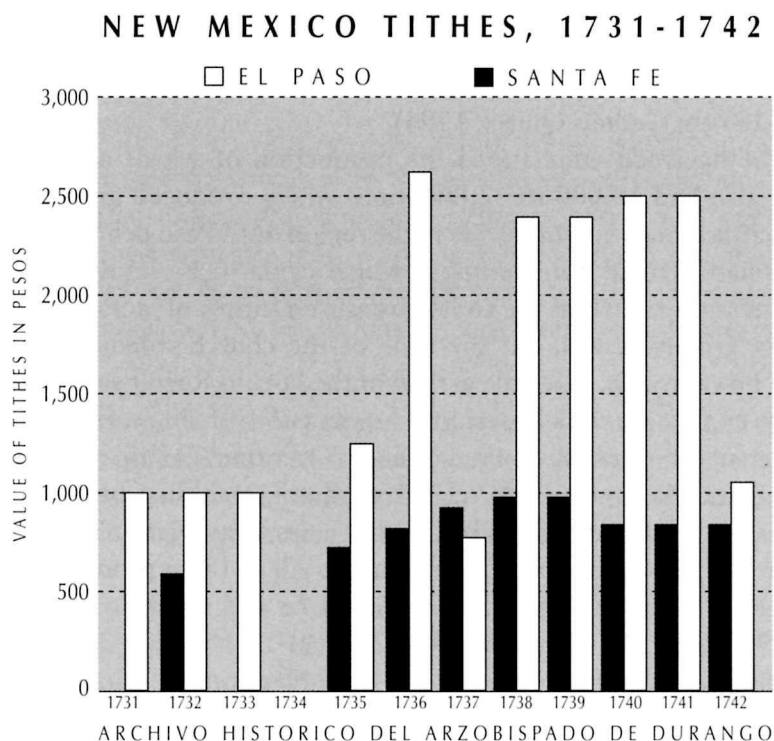


Fig. 15.3

Despite its size, complexity, and apparent success, the Hacienda de San Antonio was short lived. By 1749 it had fallen victim to natural disaster, Indian rebellion, and, in all likelihood, mismanagement. Flooding, which made agriculture a chancy occupation in the El Paso del Norte valley, was especially bad during the 1740s. Nearby Suma Indians rebelled and attacked the Hacienda de San Antonio in 1745.² A serious epidemic struck the El Paso area hard in 1748.³ Finally, the Sumas revolted again in 1749, on that occasion forcing the abandonment and eventual liquidation of the Hacienda de San Antonio. When it was auctioned off—lock, stock, and barrel—in late 1749 and early 1750, it became apparent that its most recent owners had lacked the savvy of the founder; the hacienda had been in a steady decline even before the Sumas had delivered the death blow.⁴ Difficult

times were not limited to the Hacienda de San Antonio; the whole El Paso del Norte region had entered a period of decline by mid-century that would forever remove it from its preeminent position in the colony of New Mexico.

Alonso Victores Rubín de Celis, alcalde mayor and presidial captain, noted in late 1749 that there had only been three “opulent haciendas” in the district of El Paso del Norte, all of which had fallen on hard times. A flood had destroyed his hacienda, which had been located north of the villa. The hacienda that Governor Valverde Cosío and his son-in-law had operated was no longer fit to sow. The third property, the Hacienda de Carrizal, was in a similar state.⁵ In 1754 Manuel Antonio San Juan, the new presidial captain, stated that as recently as two years earlier haciendas had still been functioning at Carrizal and Ojo Caliente, but had since been abandoned.⁶

Manuel Antonio San Juan

By 1752 sargento mayor Manuel Antonio San Juan de Santa Cruz Jáquez de Valverde had taken up the posts of captain and justicia mayor of the presidio of El Paso del Norte.⁷ A criollo by accident of birth, San Juan was a native of Veracruz, in New Spain, but was the son of an influential Basque, Francisco San Juan de Santa Cruz, a member of the council of the treasury and a native of La Barrieta (Sopuerta) in Vizcaya, Spain, and Teresa Jáquez de Valverde, a native of Veracruz.⁸

Some time after his arrival in El Paso del Norte, San Juan formally added to the weight of his civil-military authority by joining the small, close-knit local elite, uniting in matrimony with Francisca Micaela García de Noriega, daughter of Lázaro García de Noriega and Bárbara Niño Ladrón de Guevara. By so doing, he was following a pattern established by most of the European men who occupied important posts in colonial El Paso del Norte.⁹

The marriage of don Manuel and doña Francisca Micaela was certainly the social event of the year, perhaps of the century, in El Paso del Norte. At the very least, it was a remarkable business transaction, the merger of financial power and wealth on a scale seldom seen in colonial New Mexico.

At the time of the wedding, both parties prepared detailed inventories of their estates that served as a type of prenuptial agreement.¹⁰

Goods and Capital of Manuel Antonio San Juan

- 1 letter of credit for 32,548 pesos 6½ reales that remain of the mortgage of 40,000 pesos on his Hacienda de San Juan Bautista de las Encinillas and adjoining properties in the jurisdiction of Chihuahua
- 1 carriage and trappings in good condition valued at 200 pesos
- 35 mules for hauling, riding, and carrying loads and a few other at 20 pesos each
- 10 sets of riding gear at 10 pesos each
- 25 horses broken to the saddle and a few others at 10 pesos each
- 2 cowboy’s saddles and 1 of embroidered century plant fiber valued at 130 pesos
- 1 used saddle with long stirrups valued at 25 pesos
- 1 large, canvas campaign tent valued at 50 pesos
- 1 Black slave named José Antonio who cost 350 pesos
- 1 rifle, two short blunderbusses, and a brace of pistols with silver decorations valued at 300 pesos
- 1 rifle for rapid-fire shooting with silver decorations valued at 50 pesos
- 1 long rifle and a brace of French- and Castilian-style holster pistols with handles with brass decorations valued at 60 pesos
- 1 broad sword with silver decorations that cost 40 pesos

- 1 leather jacket with gold and silver decorations valued at 100 pesos
- 2 pairs of spurs, one valued at 20 pesos and the other at 30 pesos
- 2 oval shields painted in oil valued at 20 pesos
- 2 tables valued at 16 pesos
- 6 benches valued at 4 pesos each
- 1 armoire valued at 25 pesos
- 1 trunk covered in calfskin that cost 12 pesos
- 12 oval gilt frames depicting the life of the Virgin valued at 8 pesos each
- 1 sleeping cot valued at 25 pesos
- 1 bed screen valued at 25 pesos
- 1 mattress covered in hemp cloth valued at 24 pesos
- 2 pillows with crimson silk pillowcases valued at 10 pesos

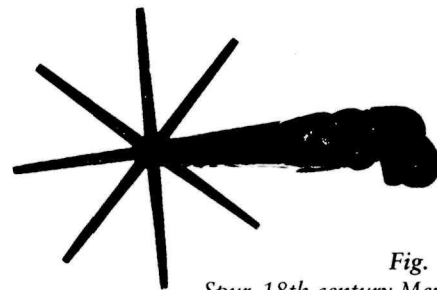


Fig. 15.4

Spur, 18th century Mexico.

Photo Jack Parsons. From Spanish Colonial Arts Society. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe. (Accession #L.5.55-53)

- Colored and white clothes worn by San Juan valued at 1,300 pesos
- 2 military-style dress swords, one with a gold-plated silver hilt and the other with a silver hilt valued at 25 pesos
- 2 canes with silver heads valued at 20 pesos
- 1 silver snuffbox valued at 10 pesos
- 1 pair of shoes, garters, and silver bow tie valued at 6 pesos
- 1 table and chest of drawers covered in red calfskin, which is a portable altar for saying mass on campaign, with all the vestments and other things that are required, which cost 300 pesos
- 11 small plates, 6 forks, 6 spoons, 4 cups, 1 small salt shaker all of silver, which, because the tax has not been paid and it is used, is valued at 7 pesos per piece
- 1 large copper bathtub valued at 25 pesos
- All the copper pieces and the service for the house and kitchen are valued at 120 pesos
- 3 hats trimmed with braid valued at 30 pesos
- 2 pairs of embroidered sacks for gunpowder and flasks, as well as everything else needed to load firearms valued at 25 pesos
- 1/3 vara of ribbon valued at 20 pesos
- 1 set of large and small suitcases valued at 60 pesos
- 1 camp bed and blanket valued at 25 pesos
- 2 pairs of embroidered half-boots valued at 12 pesos

Total value of liquid capital: 37,429 pesos 2 1/2 reales

Goods of Francisca Micaela García de Noriega

- 2 slaves named Quiterio and Lázaro valued at 250 pesos
- The place and lands of La Playa that cost 100 pesos
- 150 head of goats and sheep valued at 1 pesos a head
- 40 tame cattle with her brand valued at 10 pesos each
- 16 oval canvases in gilt frames depicting the life of the Virgin, 1 large ottoman and 12 painted and gilt footstools, which are all new and in good condition valued at 300 pesos
- 1 large, new, multicolored shag carpet lined with hemp cloth valued at 60 pesos
- 1 large, new, granadillo-wood bed with Solomonian posts valued at 400 pesos
- 1 new, red damask hanging and spread for the bed with a footstool valued at 260 pesos
- 1 large, new screen valued at 30 pesos

- 1 small, silver font of holy water valued at 12 pesos
- 1 bulto of San Antonio with a silver crown and patina valued at 20 pesos
- 1 crucifix with a red base with gold flowers, decorated gold spangles
- 2 new bedspreads covered in flowered hemp cloth valued at 40 pesos
- 4 pillows covered in ivory-colored coarse silk valued at 25 pesos
- 4 benches and a table valued at 26 pesos
- 2 trunks covered in red calfskin valued at 30 pesos
- 2 chests, one cedar and the other from Michoacán valued at 25 pesos
- 1 new, good, New Mexican bedspread valued at 80 pesos
- 1 floor-length dress of green, lustered silk and a long coat with gold flowers, both with decorated with gold lace valued at 150 pesos
- 1 floor-length dress of ivory-colored, coarse silk decorated with cloth ribbons, spangles, and lace valued at 80 pesos
- 1 floor-length dress of blue, coarse silk decorated with velvet ribbon, spangles, and wide silver lace valued at 90 pesos
- 1 floor-length dress of bright red, lustered silk decorated with wide silver Milan lace valued at 160 pesos
- 4 chintz accessories decorated with plain cloth ribbon and lace valued at 180 pesos
- 1 black velvet skirt and short jacket decorated with silver lace valued at 150 pesos
- 2 plain black coarse silk skirts, one new and the other used valued at 80 pesos
- 2 new lustered wool cloaks with wide ribbons valued at 30 pesos
- 2 velvet capes valued at 40 pesos
- 1 lined rebozo from Guapastle embroidered in silver and gold, silver and gold lace that cost 120 pesos
- 2 cloth gowns with lace valued at 100 pesos
- 1 black cloth gown with silver lace valued at 45 pesos
- 1 blue gown with silver lace valued at 40 pesos
- 2 long, new, good, silk rebozos valued at 25 pesos each
- 2 shorter, good, silk rebozos valued at 20 pesos
- 1 petticoat of fine scarlet cloth decorated with silver valued at 40 pesos
- 8 pairs of silk stockings of various colors with raised embroidery, some used and other never worn valued at 8 pesos a pair
- 6 pairs of long silk stockings valued at 3 pesos 4 reales a pair
- 12 pairs of underwear of fine thread valued at 1 peso a pair
- 2 pairs of Castilian garters with silver embroidery valued at 6 pesos
- 2 pairs of silk gloves with gold and silver embroidery valued at 16 pesos
- 6 blouses of fine Dutch linen with worked cambric sleeves decorated with wide, fine Flemish lace valued at 150 pesos
- 6 skirts of different colors of fine Dutch linen, well worked with silk and decorated with good lace valued at 120 pesos
- 6 *bretaña* blouses with plain ruffles valued at 36 pesos
- 6 plain *bretaña* skirts valued at 24 pesos
- 12 new, white, bodices made of fine Dutch linen, some worked and others plain



Fig. 15.5
St. Anthony,
late 18th century Guatemala.
Photo Jack Parsons.
From Spanish Colonial Arts
Society Collection.
Courtesy Museum of New
Mexico Press, Santa Fe.
(Accession #L.5.74-7)

- valued at 15 pesos
- 6 handkerchiefs of well-worked white cambric valued at 16 pesos
- 6 plain handkerchiefs of fine Dutch linen valued at 7 pesos 4 reales
- 8 sets of *bretaña* sheets, some plain and others trimmed in lace valued at 80 pesos
- 8 pairs of pillowcases, some of fine Dutch linen and others of plain *bretaña*, some plain and some trimmed in lace or cambric valued at 80 pesos
- 80 marks of wrought silver, some taxed and some not, in various pieces at 8 pesos 4 reales a mark
- Some pearl bracelets with gold and emerald clasps valued at 300 pesos
- A triple-strand pearl necklace valued at 50 pesos
- A gold crucifix necklace and gold earrings decorated with emeralds valued at 80 pesos
- A smooth, gold crucifix and gold earrings decorated with blue stones valued at 50 pesos
- 2 pairs of buckles, 1 snuffbox, 6 cuff links, 12 rings, and 1 reliquary with a wax Agnus Dei, everything made of gold and valued at 225 pesos
- Some silver buckles and 2 silver reliquaries valued at 12 pesos
- 1 large Agnus Dei for the headboard of the bed, with a gold-plated silver frame valued at 30 pesos
- 1 Italian print of Nuestra Señora de la Modestia with a silver frame valued at 12 pesos
- 1 print of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe with a black wooden frame
- 2 large, well-made suitcases and 1 small suitcase from San Miguel, with leather straps and good locks and keys valued at 100 pesos
- 1 large, new, still, larger than a barrel holding a hundredweight, with its loader, release, and boiler head that cost 150 pesos
- 25 wine kegs and hoops in good condition valued at 30 pesos each
- Total liquid capital 6,724 pesos 4 reales

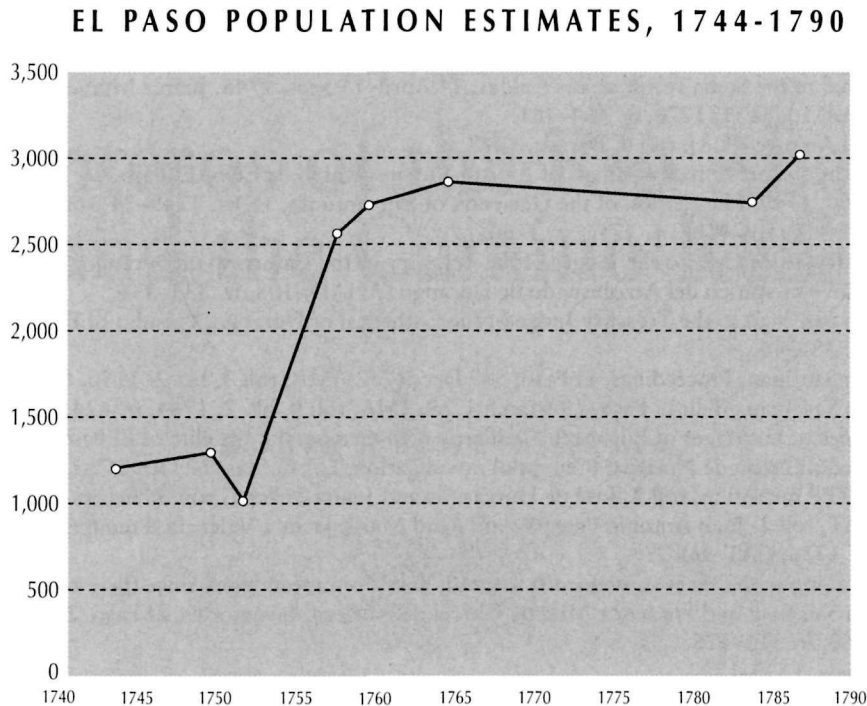
The obvious material wealth of the newlyweds challenges the commonly held notion that colonial New Mexico in general and El Paso del Norte in particular were nothing more than remote backwaters of the Spanish empire.

The brief story of the marriage also helps illustrate the challenge of life at the pass astride the Camino Real in the eighteenth century. Manuel and Francisca Micaela produced two daughters, Teresa Margarita and Francisca Dionisia de Borgia, neither of whom survived childhood. Teresa Margarita died in 1761. She was followed to the grave by her father and sister three years later. That year, 1764, a typhus epidemic ravaged the area. It seems safe to assume that the disease, which claimed its first victim in Mexico City in 1761, had made its way north over the human thoroughfare that was the Camino Real. El Paso del Norte's climate and location may well have made it a near perfect breeding ground for disease (Hendricks 1993:55, 57–58).

POPULATION AND DISEASE

No fewer than seven times between 1733 and 1772, outbreaks of disease were experienced in El Paso del Norte. The episodes in 1748 and 1764 were notably deadly, killing almost twenty percent of the population on each occasion.¹¹ A smallpox epidemic also hit the region very hard in 1780–1781 (Timmons 1990:55). The cumulative result of the cycle of disease and death was that the population size stagnated for much of the latter half of the eighteenth century (Figure 15.6). By contrast, the upriver colony continued a more predictable rate of growth, even though such events as the smallpox epidemic of 1780–1781 temporarily arrested normal population increase.

Fig. 15.6



By 1800 the population of El Paso del Norte had begun to rebound and by the eve of the beginning of the struggle for Mexican independence a decade later had climbed to 7,000 (Timmons 1990:67). That figure, however, meant that the district was approximately one fifth the size of the upriver colony of New Mexico.

EL PASO DEL NORTE IN TRANSITION

By 1815, following the defeat of insurgent forces in Mexico, the nature of the relationship between Santa Fe and El Paso del Norte and the traffic over the Camino Real altered fundamentally. As authorities turned their attention to the threat that Anglo-Americans posed to New Mexico, the presidio of San Elizario, located downriver from the villa, took on a vital role in supporting and provisioning the garrison in Santa Fe. Until Mexican Independence in 1821, fully a third of the troopers from San Elizario formed a New Mexico detachment, traveling up and down the Camino Real to supply foodstuffs, clothing, and munitions to soldiers stationed along the way, at Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Taos.¹² With independence, El Paso del Norte, which had always been an integral part of New Mexico, even dominating the colony in certain respects until the middle of the eighteenth century, was removed from its jurisdiction and became a part of the emerging Mexican state of Chihuahua. ♣

NOTES

1. The descriptions of events in El Paso del Norte in the aftermath of the Pueblo Revolt are drawn from the following sources: Hackett and Shelby 1942; Hendricks 1994a; Jenkins 1989; Kessell and Hendricks 1992; Walz 1951.
2. Documents related to the Suma revolt at Las Caldas, 24 April–11 Sept. 1745, Juárez Municipal Archives, second filming (JMA), roll 10, bk. 1, 1770, fr. 464–481.
3. Juárez Cathedral Archive (JCA), roll 4, Burials, 1748.
4. Copies of certifications presented on behalf of Alonso Victores Rubín de Celis, El Paso, 26 July 1749, Archivo de Hidalgo del Parral, 1749. Liquidation of the Hacienda of San Antonio, 1 Oct. 1749–24 April 1751, JMA, roll 3, bk. 1, 1757, fr. 1–400; roll 4, bk. 1, 1757, fr. 1–66.
5. Alonso Victores Rubín de Celis to the Judges of the Treasury of the Cathedral of Durango, Presidio of El Paso, 29 Nov. 1749, Archivo Histórico del Arzobispado de Durango (AHAD)-108, fr. 333–334.
6. Manuel Antonio San Juan to the Treasury Judge of the Cathedral of Durango, Presidio of El Paso, 14 June 1754, AHAD-108, fr. 338–340.
7. Manuel Antonio San Juan, Proceedings, El Paso, 5–9 Dec. 1752, JMA, roll 3, bk. 2, 1750, fr. 261–297.
8. Manuel Antonio San Juan, Will, El Paso, 19 March 1764, JMA, roll 9, bk. 2, 1764, fr. 624, 627–655.
9. For some examples of marriages of European Spaniards with members of the elite of El Paso del Norte see Angel Rosales and Rosalía García de Noriega, Prenuptial investigation, Las Caldas, 27 Oct. 1733, Catholic Archives of Texas (CAT), UTEP microfilm, roll 2. José de Horcasitas and Juana Téllez Girón, Prenuptial investigation, El Paso, 1 Oct. 1736, CAT, roll 2. Juan Antonio Pérez Velarde and María Jacinta Valencia, Prenuptial investigation, El Paso, 29 Dec. 1736, CAT, roll 2.
These originals, along with others subsequently located, have been recataloged since these rolls were filmed.
10. Manuel Antonio San Juan and Francisca Micaela García de Noriega, Inventories, El Paso, 20 July 1759, JMA, roll 6, bk. 1, 1760, fr. 516–526.
11. JCA, roll 4, Burials, 1733–1772.
12. Hendricks 1994c. Isidro Rey to the interim lieutenant governor of New Mexico, San Elizario, August 30, 1815, Spanish Archives of New Mexico (SANM) II:2623. Receipts for supplies from the San Elizario detachment in New Mexico, SANM II:2767.

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Santeros of the Río Abajo and the Camino Real

Robin Farwell Gavin



DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD, Spanish New Mexico was divided into two political districts: the Río Abajo (downriver) and the Río Arriba (upriver). The physical division between these districts was the La Bajada escarpment, a drop of some 1,000 feet on the road between Santa Fe (Río Arriba) and Albuquerque (Río Abajo) and a challenge to even the most adept of travelers. La Bajada represented more than just a physical division, however. As further research is done, it appears that there were also noticeable, if not notable, differences between these two districts in speech, economics, lifestyle, and art forms.

While the artistic legacy of the Río Arriba has been studied in depth and has come to define the Hispano art of New Mexico (see, for example, Boyd 1974; Espinosa 1960; Wroth 1982), the art of the Río Abajo has been virtually ignored.¹ A study of a number of *santos* (religious images of saints) of the Río Abajo, however, has revealed distinct differences in construction, style, and aesthetic from those of the Río Arriba.² These differences are probably due, in part, to the location of the communities of the Río Abajo along the Camino Real. Situated along the principal trade route from Mexico City to Santa Fe, the residents of the communities of the Río Abajo were able to take advantage of their location as the first settlements the trade caravans reached after leaving their supply points in Nueva Vizcaya.³ Not only did they have easier access to merchandise brought from the southern provinces than the residents of the Río Arriba, who had to travel to Santa Fe to meet the caravans, but itinerant artists and craftsmen from other provinces of New Spain would frequent these villages more often, as they were less removed from their homes. This proximity to and exchange with Nueva Vizcaya is reflected in the art of the Río Abajo.

SETTLEMENT HISTORY

In the seventeenth century, Spanish settlements in the Río Abajo were established at existing pueblos and along the Río Grande. These settlements were abandoned, and most of the buildings and furnishings used by the Spanish were destroyed, during the thirteen years following the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. After Albuquerque's founding in 1706 settlers began to return to the Río Abajo, resettling areas that had been abandoned. The Pueblo of Isleta was refounded in 1710; Tomé and Los Chávez

were settled in 1739 and Valencia in 1740 on the sites of seventeenth-century habitations. Throughout the eighteenth century, the southernmost settlement of the Río Abajo was Sabinal. South of this to the *villa* of El Paso del Norte was *tierra despoblada*, terrain unsettled by the Spanish owing to continuous strife with the nomadic Apaches.

There has been little documentation of art work in these communities along the Camino Real in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (see Chapters 13 and 14). A rare seventeenth-century inventory describes the furnishings of the Church of Our Lady of Socorro in 1672 (Scholes and Adams 1952). Among the items listed are:

- a Holy Christ from Michoacan of perfect proportions
- a very beautiful oil painting of Our Lady of Socorro a little more than four varas high with a frame of local manufacture
- a Child Jesus twenty-four inches high
- a very beautiful oil painting of the death of St. Joseph two and a half varas long, with a frame of local manufacture
- a Roman painting on copper of the Virgen del Pópolu, with its ashes of roses taffeta canopy
- a canvas of an *Ecce Homo* two varas long, with a gilded frame made in Mexico
- a carved image of Our Lady, twenty-four inches high, with its gilded pedestal, imperial crown of silver
- four large carpets and two Turkish rugs . . . with the remark that the carpets are of local manufacture

At this time, it appears that carpentry (frames) and weaving (carpets) were local crafts, but other items adorning the church were transported from not only other provinces of New Spain, but from Italy (the Roman painting on copper) and Turkey as well.

In the mid-eighteenth century, Bishop Pedro Tamarón y Romeral mentions a church of the Immaculate Conception in the town of Tomé, but only to say that it is “decent.” Of Isleta he says the church is single-naved, with an adorned altar (Adams 1954). Fray Atansio Domínguez’s ecclesiastical inspection in 1776 describes in further detail the furnishings in these same churches:

[The Tomé chapel’s] furnishings as follows: In the center of the upper wall there is a niche like an arch containing a middle-sized completely carved image in the round of Our Lady of the Conception. She has imitation lace on the edge of her mantle. Her wardrobe consists of six silver reliquaries, an escutcheon and medal of the same, a small reliquary and five medals of bronze, an ordinary rosary set in silver, another silver one. She has a crown of gilded cardboard on her head. Fine pearl earrings in her ears. Around her neck two strings of ordinary pearls. On her wrists bracelets of black jet. On her fingers twelve silver and copper rings.

There are two rather middle-sized mirrors above the arch, or niche, and fourteen old, but not torn, canvases arranged on the whole wall. There is a gradín, and on it stand a middle-sized Jesús Nazareno in the round in old clothes; a completely nondescript tabernacle with a key; a cross for Mass. The altar table is adobe with an altar stone, wooden missal stand, two bronze candlesticks, and a little bell. In the nave there is a badly-made wooden confessional.

[Isleta] High Altar: A niche has been opened near the center of the wall, and it contains an old, completely carved image of St. Augustine, made outside the kingdom

vested (the clothing is carved) as a bishop, and a vara high. Above it hangs an ordinary old oil painting on canvas. Four middle-sized old paintings on buffalo skin are arranged at the sides. The gradin is adobe and holds a middle-sized cross with a lacquer Christus, now old, an image of the Immaculate Conception in Michoacán paste, and two small brass candlesticks, which the King gave. The altar table is adobe with an altar stone given by the King, an ordinary lectern, a small bronze bell, a board dais, and a poor carpet.

Fray Atanasio Dominguez had very little regard for the skill of the craftsman of Nuevo México, and those items for which he had few compliments were probably made within the province: the “badly-made” wooden confessional, the “old” paintings on buffalo skin (Pierce 1991), the “ordinary” lectern, and the “poor carpet.” The principal images in the churches, both sculptures and paintings, were still most likely transported from points south via the supply caravans. The image of the Immaculate Conception, made of “Michoacán paste,” refers to a technique widely used in the colonial period in the state of Michoacán, Mexico; the image of San Agustín was made “outside the kingdom.”

By the end of the eighteenth century, it is evident that there were numerous craftsmen working in the Río Abajo. The 1790 census for the communities of the Río Abajo (Atrisco, Valencia, San Fernando, Tomé, Pajarito, Los Padillas, Ysleta, Los Lentes, Los Chaves, Belén, Sabinal) lists occupations for the heads of households (Olmsted 1975). Among the many farmers, ranchers, servants, and day laborers were listed 45 weavers, 1 spinner (this task may have often been accomplished by women in the household and would not typically have been included in the census), 11 carders (who combed the wool to prepare it for weaving), 17 carpenters, 4 tailors, 5 shoemakers, 4 blacksmiths, 2 silversmiths, and 1 mason. While there are no identified examples of work from this period in the Río Abajo, it appears that many items—textiles, furniture, clothing, iron tools, jewelry—were produced for local use as well as for shipment to other provinces (Pino 1812, in Bustamante and Simmons 1995).

In the nineteenth century, the population continued to move south, resettling Socorro in 1816. At the same time, settlers began to move north from El Paso del Norte into the Mesilla Valley—the *tierra despoblada*. Doña Ana, founded in 1843, was among the earliest of these settlements to survive. The American occupation of Nuevo México in 1846 and the efforts of a Catholic priest, don Ramón Ortiz, escalated the settlement of the Mesilla Valley (Mary Taylor, Chapter 20, this volume). Mesilla was established in 1849–1850 and others followed in the late nineteenth century: San Miguel, La Mesa, and Chamberino.

Nineteenth-century inventories and accounts indicate the range of furnishings and art work that were found within the homes and churches of the Río Abajo. In 1801, the paintings illustrating the life of the Blessed Virgin that had been ordered from outside the province to adorn the main altar of Our Lady of Belén were in progress.⁴ An 1821 inventory of the Immaculate Conception Church in Tomé lists the following objects among others:

In the nave:	In the sacristy:	In the baptistry:
2 old <i>retablos</i> of saints ⁵	1 table with a drawer	1 copper baptismal font
1 wooden pulpit, old	3 rugs of <i>gerga</i>	with its shell
2 confessionals, old	1 silver chalice with paten & spoon	1 <i>retablo</i> of San Juan Bautista
	1 tall wooden cross with bronze Christ	1 <i>santo entierro</i> statue
	2 wooden processional lanterns	with the following
	2 chairs	1 wooden sepulchre
	2 benches	1 mattress
	1 stool	1 fine sleeping mat ⁶



Fig. 16.1
San Antonio de Padua / St. Anthony of Padua, attributed to Antonio Silva, Valencia, New Mexico, early 19th century. Wood, gesso, glass, oil-based pigments. Collection of the Mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Peralta, New Mexico. Photo Blair Clark.



Although some of these objects were still being transported from the south—the reliquary and monstrance were noted as being brought from Mexico [City] by don Bartolomé Baca—much of this material was probably made locally. By the early nineteenth century there was at least one well-known santero in the Tomé area. According to oral history, this artist was Antonio Silva, a santero who had reportedly studied art in Spain or Portugal and moved to Adelino, near Tomé, around 1790 (Boyd 1974; Ellis 1954; Espinosa 1960; Steele 1994). Other sources identify his parents as Santiago Silva and Josepha Ponce de Leon, who may have moved to New Mexico from Querétaro.⁷ A couple named Santiago Silva and Jophefa Ponce de Leon, however, were living near the Pueblo of Picuris in 1788 when they gave birth to Antonio Joseph, born on September 9 and baptized in the church of San Lorenzo at Picuris (Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, Picuris Baptisms, roll 6, B-22). In the 1790 census they are listed as residents of “a settlement near the mission and Pueblo of Picuries” with three sons, ages 13, 3, and 1 (Olmsted 1975). If this is the same Antonio Silva who later appeared in Tomé, he probably did not become active as a santero until close to 1810.

Images attributed to Silva, or to the same hand, have been located in Tomé,⁸ Valencia, Casa Colorado, Los Chávez, Manzano, and Mesilla.⁹ His work appears to have more in common with contemporary religious imagery of Mexico than with the early nineteenth-century images of the Río Arriba (Figure 16.1). The known statues by this artist are large, measuring from 3 to 8 feet in height; the head and hands are carved separately from the body and are naturalistic, with soft, fleshy cheeks and double chins; the eyes are painted glass; and most resemble Mexican processional statuary in their manner of construction as *imagenes de vestir* (images meant to be dressed).¹⁰

After completing his work in the Río Abajo, Silva may have relocated. An inscription on a statue of the Blessed Virgin, now in a private collection in Mesilla, indicates he traveled south along the Camino Real and settled in the town of Guadalupe, south of El Paso del Norte:

En el año de 1855. Yo Antonio Silva vesino de Guadalupe a los veinte dias del mes de Mayo entregue la ymagen de Nuestra Señora de los Dolores que hise por un compromiso que tenia con el señor Cura Don Ramon Ortiz.

Fig. 16.2
Santo Niño de Atocha / the Holy Child of Atocha, Mesilla Valley workshop, formerly at the Church of San Luis Rey, Chamberino, New Mexico, early 19th century. Wood, gesso, cloth, metallic paint, water-based pigments. Private collection. Photo Blair Clark.

In the year of 1855. I Antonio Silva, resident of Guadalupe, on May 20 delivered this image of Our Lady of Sorrows that I made as an obligation [agreement] that I had with the Reverend Father Don Ramon Ortiz.¹¹

The similarity between the work of the Silva of Guadalupe and the Silva of Adelino is striking enough to suggest these works are by the same hand, although separated by a number of years. This is particularly interesting not only in terms of the strong southern influence on his art work, but if this proves true, it will be the only signed and dated work by an artist working in the Río Abajo.

Aside from the work attributed to Silva, several other workshops can be identified from the Río Abajo and southern New Mexico. A number of *bultos* from the Mesilla Valley share characteristics that suggest they were associated with one workshop, herein referred to as the Mesilla Valley workshop. These characteristics include the use of gesso or molded plaster for sculpting details (fingers, facial features, costume highlights) and occasionally for creating heads, hands, feet, or an entire figure; cloth dipped in gesso and modeled to form drapery; bronze, silver or gold leaf in costume details; and thick pedestals (Figure 16.2). Many of these characteristics have been associated with the work of the anonymous Laguna Santero (working 1790–1808), indicating that this artist may have lived or worked extensively in the border region.

Some of these characteristics can be found among a group of images of San Ysidro from the Río Abajo near the present-day border. Like the Silva pieces of the Tomé area, these images are often large compared with the early nineteenth century artwork of the Río Arriba. During the survey, five San Ysidro figures were recorded in the Mesilla Valley area, one of which bears an inscription stating that it was repainted in Las Cruces in 1888. Two others are from churches in Chamberino and El Paso and another two are thought to have come from northern Chihuahua.



Fig. 16.3

San Ysidro Labrador / St. Isidore the Farmer, early 19th century New Mexico. Private collection. Photo courtesy of the Arizona State University Art Museum.



Fig. 16.4

San José / St. Joseph, the Master of San José, southern New Mexico, early 19th century. Wood, gesso, water- and oil-based pigments. The technique used for the decoration of the robe on this San José is a punch or stamp similar to that used for decorating *estofado* figures in Mexico. The stamp was used in Mexico to expose the gilding beneath a painted surface in imitation of brocade fabric. This is a technique that has not been recorded for santos from the Río Arriba and again illustrates the close ties between the santos from communities along the Camino Real and those of Mexico. Fred Harvey Collection of the International Folk Art Foundation, Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe. Photo Blair Clark.



Fig. 16.5

San Ysidro Labrador / St. Isidore the Farmer, collected in Socorro, New Mexico, early 19th century. Wood, gesso, water-based paint, paper, gold paint. Gift of M/M John Gaw Meem to Spanish Colonial Arts Society, at the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe. Photo Blair Clark.



All the figures wear the same three-quarter-length black coat, knee-high breeches, and short boots. They typically have short arms in relation to the rest of their body, with the right arm raised and held in front of the chest and the left arm holding a staff. The angel and two oxen stand to the right. The similarities of these pieces suggest that there may have been an artist or workshop in southern New Mexico producing bultos of San Ysidro (Figure 16.3; also see Figure 16.5).

A number of images of San Jose bearing similar characteristics have been recorded in the Mesilla Valley. The similarities between these figures in their solidity and monumentality, in the attention to the weight and fold of drapery, and in the slight inclination of the heads suggest a naturalism reflecting that found in the art of northern Mexico. Although not made by a single hand, the obvious connection between these figures suggests that they may have come from a workshop that produced numerous images of San José (Figure 16.4). A number of these, rendered in a style known as “Provincial Academic,” have also been assigned to the hand of either fray Andrés Garcia, who was born in Puebla, Mexico, and was sent to the New Mexico missions in 1747, or an anonymous artist called “The Master of San José,” who was thought to have been working in northern New Mexico (Mather 1983; Wroth 1982). One image is decorated by means of a stamp in a technique similar to that used for decorating *estofado* figures in New Spain—a technique apparently unknown to Río Arriba artists.

Similar techniques and characteristics of three images suggest the work of a single artist who may have worked in Socorro: a small statue of Jesus Nazareno from the town of Chamberino, south of Las Cruces; a life-size Santo Entierro from the Church of Our Lady of Socorro in Socorro; and a large image of San Ysidro, also from Socorro. In all three images, the hands are formed of gray plaster; some of the clothing is dipped in gesso, hardened, and painted; and the rendering of the eyes and hands is accomplished with a fine bristled brush with penmanship quality (Figures 16.5 and 16.6). Palette and design elements on the angels with San Ysidro and on the loincloth of the Santo Entierro are identical. This is the first evidence of a nineteenth-century santero working in the Socorro area.

Fig. 16.6

Jesus Nazareno / Jesus of Nazareth or Jesus the Nazarene, early 19th century New Mexico. Wood, gesso, cloth, oil-based pigments. Private collection. Photo Blair Clark.

Despite the diversity of subject matter, there are striking similarities in materials, technique, proportions, and composition among and between these images recorded along the Camino Real. And many of these aspects suggest that the artists were more heavily influenced by the art further south in New Spain than by their contemporaries in the Río Arriba. Their work, in fact, suggests a transition between the academic centers of Mexico City and Durango and the regional style that developed in the Río Arriba. In technique the images reflect current trends in the provincial art being produced at the time in northern Mexico—the large-scale figures, the *imagenes de vestir*, the imitation *estofado*, and the use of gilding and gesso.¹² All the figures express a naturalism uncharacteristic of the aesthetic that blossomed in the Río Arriba—a naturalism that is distinctly related to provincial Mexican art and which suggests area workshops more closely affiliated with the artistic community of northern Mexico than that of the Río Arriba. ♣

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NOTES

1. The only references I have found for art in the Río Abajo and southern New Mexico are Ellis 1954, Coulter and Dixon 1990, and Bowen 1994.
2. This study was undertaken by the author in the fall of 1993 and spring of 1994 in preparation for an exhibit titled “El Río Abajo: Traditional Art of Southern New Mexico,” which opened at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe in July 1994. The study consisted of an informal survey of extant religious images, as well as nineteenth-century tinwork, furniture, and textiles, from selected churches and private collections in communities along the Río Grande and the Camino Real beginning in Corrales and continuing south to the Mesilla Valley.
3. At the time that most of the art work discussed below was made, New Mexico was still a colony of Spain and then part of Mexico—the boundary that now lies between New Mexico and Mexico did not exist. In the colonial period, the province of Nuevo México included the villa of El Paso del Norte and extended south to below Carrizal (near present-day Ahumada on the road to Chihuahua; Jones 1979). For the purposes of this study, and to emphasize the fact that New Mexico included what is now the border area, I refer to the province of Nuevo México and its neighbor, Nueva Vizcaya.
4. Kessell 1980:148, n. 3. Six of these paintings are still in the rectory of Our Lady of Belén.
5. In this case, the word *retablo* may not refer to the traditional New Mexican images painted on wood but to an altar screen or a grouping of paintings of saints like that described above by Fray Atanasio Domínguez for the church in Tomé. See Ivey, Chapter 13.
6. These items are excerpted from the 1821 inventory that is reproduced in full at the end of this article. This inventory was found in xerox in the church museum in Tomé and has never before been published. The baptismal font and the Santo Entierro can be found today in the Tomé church and its museum.
7. Duran 1993. Interviews with Edwin Berry and Fred Landovaso of Tomé and Philomena Baca of Belén, 1994. These sources also indicate that he married Maria Antonia Baca, sister of don Bartolomé Baca.
8. Interestingly, the pieces from the church in Tomé that are said to have been made by Silva in 1790 do not appear in the 1821 inventory. They could, however, have been in another church in the area at the time of the inventory, as many objects have been moved from church to church over the years.
9. Some of these images were first recorded and documented by the author in 1993–1994; others were found in photo files compiled during the 1992 Photographic Inventory sponsored by the Museum of International Folk Art and the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Notes and photos on file at the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe.
10. Some images previously attributed to Silva (Ellis 1954; Espinosa 1960) such as the large crucifix still hanging in the church in Tomé and the crucifix hanging in the church of Cristo Rey, Santa Fe, are not by the same artist that created the pieces illustrated here.
11. Boyd (1974:432) mentions this same image, but says that it was made “by the santero Rafael Silva in the 1840s.”
12. Many of these comparisons have been made based on items in the Museum of International Folk Art, for there is no published study of the provincial religious art of northern Mexico.

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APPENDIX

1821 Tomé Inventory transcribed by Marina Ochoa (curator/archivist, Archdiocese of Santa Fe) and Robin Farwell Gavin from copy retrieved from Tomé church, November 1994.

Note: [] denotes letters filled in by transcriber. / denotes new line. ** denotes new page.

<u>Cuerpo de la Yglesia</u>		BB 1 santo entierro de bulto con lo sig[ien] ^{te}	200
2 (?) retablos de santos biejos		1 urna de madera	
1 pulpito de madera, biejo		1 colchon	
2 confesionarios, biejos		1 petate fino	
1 coro con su barandal de palo maltra / tado			
		**	
<u>Sacristia</u>		BB 1 tobajilla morada con q[u] ^e se agorre el [illegible]	oo12
1a mesa con su cajon		BB 1 cruz de plata p[ar] ^a los s[an] ^{tos} oleos y relic[ari] ^o	
1 ornam[en] ^{to} de terciopelo encarnado		de / plata p[ar] ^a el viatico	10
1 id morada		BB 1 frontal coapastle en	oo6
1 id verde de razo		1 cajoncito con sus ampulas de bidrio p[ar] ^a	
BB 1 id negro de razilla (rasilla)		conducir los s[an] ^{tos} oleos	
1 capa bla[n]ca de espolinado		1 custodia de plata sobredorada [con peso de]	
BB 1 id negra de razilla		1 copon de id id todo con peso	
1 manteles de Bretaña		de 15 m[xx] ^{es} 3 [x] a 23 p[eso] ^s	363
1 ynsensaria con su cuchara y naveta / de plata		1 [illegible] sobredorado en	21
3 crismas de plata con su caja de / oja de lata		Por el flete de Mexico a aqui cajon	
1 acetre de cobre		[y el si[guiente]?]	xxx
BB 2 candeleros de cobre		2 v lana p[ar] ^a el [comxxxxx]	oo3
4 id id		1 ornam[en] ^{to} de tela de oro	
1 alba de Bretaña		1 id de tisú encarnado	
1 sobrepellis de id		1 alba de Bretaña en	600
BB 1 ornam[en] ^{to} de lustrina blanco con frontal /		1 caliz de plata sobredorado	
q[u] ^e importó	124 o	1a misal	
		1 frontal tratable	
		3 palias biejas	
		2 albas biejas	
		2 amitos biejos	
		1 misal biejo	
		3 cingulas de algodón biejos	
		8 purificadores biejos	
		4 [manotejos?] biejos	
		3 [h]opas de sarsal encarnado biejos	
		3 roquetes de puntibi viejos	
		**	
		1 frasada	
		3 sabanas de lienzo	
		3 de musolina	
		1 paño de id[xx] ^m	
		2 almoadas	
		1 rebozo coapastle	
		<u>Campanario</u>	
		[torn] grandes de cobre sin bade / jos y 1a chica	
		<u>Cementerio</u>	
		Tiene 31 v. de largo y 24 de an / cho	
		<u>Ante Sacristia</u>	
		Sin ningun adorno	
		Tiene 6 v. de largo y 4 de ancho	
<u>Bautisterio</u>			
Tiene 8 v de largo y 5 de ancho			
BB 1 pila bautismal de cobre con su con / cha			
1 retablo de S Juan Bautista			

Todas las Halajas q[u]e tienen al margen /
 BB son dadas p[o]r el Cap[ita]n D[on]. Bartolo / mé Baca
 a cuenta de las 300 obejas / q[u]e tenía de pie de Altar
 esta Yglesia / en el año de 1817. Se aumentaron dos

•
 **

cuentas con el alcance q[u]e tenía y los Borre- / quitas del mismo año por lo q[u]e ascendió / a quinientas
 obejas el principal y siguen / dando el redito de noventa carn[era]s. Sin / otro estipendio por quedar
 aseguradas de todo riesgo.

En el mes de Av[ri]l de 1820 alcanzó / esta yglesia ciento setenta pesos y / por donacion q[u]e hizo d[ic]ho
 Cap[ita]n de / ciento treinta ascendio a tres cientos / pesos su alcance con los cuales se / mandó hacer y
 se trajo de Mexico / la custodia copon y relicario q[u]e im / portó 375 p[eso]s y por no alcanzar p[ar]a /
 su pago los 300 p[eso]s se agregaron los / noventa del redito de este año que / dando en poder del Cap[ita]n
 y a favor / de esta yglesia la cantidad de 15 p[esos]. / rebajado el valor de d[ic]has halajas / los dos
 ornam[en]tos con lo demas q[u]e esta in / cluso en la partida de 600 p[eso]s lo compró / d[ic]ho Cap[ita]n
 al s[er]vicio visitador D[xx] D[on] Juan / Bautista de Guebara por 700 p[eso]s pero / por gracia q[u]e hizo
 a esta yglesia lo / dió en 600 p[eso]s y por tanto le queda / restando al Cap[ita]n la cantidad de / quinientos
 ochenta y cinco pesos que- / dando ya pagados los quince q[u]e sa- / lia restando

**

El santo entierro aunque esta pues / to p[o]r 200 p[eso]s no costó sino 400 pero / por haber dado la mitad
 el comun / no se puso mas de lo q[u]e salió de / cuenta de Pie de Altar

Todas las partidas q[u]e no se han sa / cado al margen se quedan asi / por causa de no estar aqui el / S[er]vicio
 Cap[ita]n y no constar en los / otros ynventarios el valor de ellos / y por q[u]e solam[en]te el lo puede saber
 / y por lo mismo no se liquida total / mente la cuenta mas q[u]e solam[en]te / de aquello q[u]e consta en los
 otros / ynventarios

Tome julio 11 de 1821
 [xxxx] Fran[cis]co Ygn[a]cio
 de Madariaga

En 22 de Mayo de 1822 abono esta Ygle / sia del Pie de Altar noventa / carn[ero]s a c[uen]ta
 de quinientos ochen / ta y cinco q[u]e le dare al Ca[ita]n / D[on] Bartolome Baca 90
 Madariaga

En 22 de Mayo de [1823] abano esta / yglesia al Cap[ita]n D[on] B[artolo]me Baca
 noven / ta carn[ero]s q[u]e redituo el Pie de Altar de / obejas q[u]e tiene 90
 Madariaga

En 22 de Mayo de 1824 abono esta yglesia / a d[ic]ho S[er]vicio Cap[ita]n noventa
 carneros q[u]e / redituo el pie de Altar de obejas q[u]e tiene 90
 Madariaga

En 22 de Mayo de 1825 abono esta Yglesia al menciona / do S[er]vicio Cap[ita]n noventa
 Carn[ero]s q[u]e redituo al pie de / altar de obejas q[u]e tiene 90

En 21 de mayo de 1826 abono esta ygle- / sia al S[er]vicio D[on] B[artolo]me Baca
 noventa carneros del / producto de 900(?) obejas q[u]e tiene el pie de Altar
 Madariaga

The Camino Real at Cerro and Plaza Tomé

Dan Scurlock



SOME 23 MILES DOWNRIVER FROM ALBUQUERQUE is a prominent landmark rising more than 600 feet above the Río Grande Valley. This basalt-capped hill, a remnant volcano located on the east side of the floodplain, overlooked the Pueblo Indian trail long used for trade and travel to reach such distant points as Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, and Taos Pueblo (Riley 1993:13–15). Most of the reach of this trail, from El Paso to San Juan Pueblo, and later Santa Fe, became part of the upper Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, officially opened by Juan de Oñate in 1598. Fifty-eight years before this date, Coronado reached the river near Socorro, then traveled upstream, past this prominent landmark. From about modern Highway 60 to Albuquerque, he passed a cluster of pueblos, which was the southern end of the Tiguex Province (Bolton 1964:197–198). Two other entradas, one led by Chamuscado-Rodriguez in 1581 and the other by Espejo in early 1583, found five villages, all well-stocked with agricultural produce, in the Tomé-Isleta area, as did Oñate 16 years later (Hammond and Rey 1953[I]:318–319; Schroeder 1979:238–239, 242). One of these pueblos was near Tomé Hill, although, surprisingly, none of the three explorers mentioned or described this eminence. Perhaps Oñate or some of his men, moving up the east bank of the river, which then flowed close to the western base of Tomé Hill, climbed up to view the surrounding area, especially to the north.

As the new colony was being established at San Juan Pueblo and new missions at many of the Río Grande pueblos, a mission supply program was established over the Camino Real between Mexico City–Santa Bárbara and the new capital. Usually consisting of 32 wagons with a military escort and generally accompanied by priests, merchants, and government personnel, ten of these *conductas* passed Tomé Hill between 1600 and 1630. From 1631 to the late 1670s, caravans arrived regularly every three years (Ivey 1993:41, 43, 46, 48).

The 1660 trade caravan included 10 new carts, at least 160 oxen, and more than 60 pack mules. Among the cargo going south from Santa Fe were 1,350 deerskins, an unknown number of buffalo hides, 600 pairs of woolen stockings, 300 fanegas of piñon nuts, salt, and quantities of clothing (Minge 1979:11). Imports for the missions generally included retablos, gold and silver items for the church, rich vestments used in the mass, supplies for the sacristy, clothing for the priests and servants, tools for the workshops, musical instruments, horses, and chocolate.

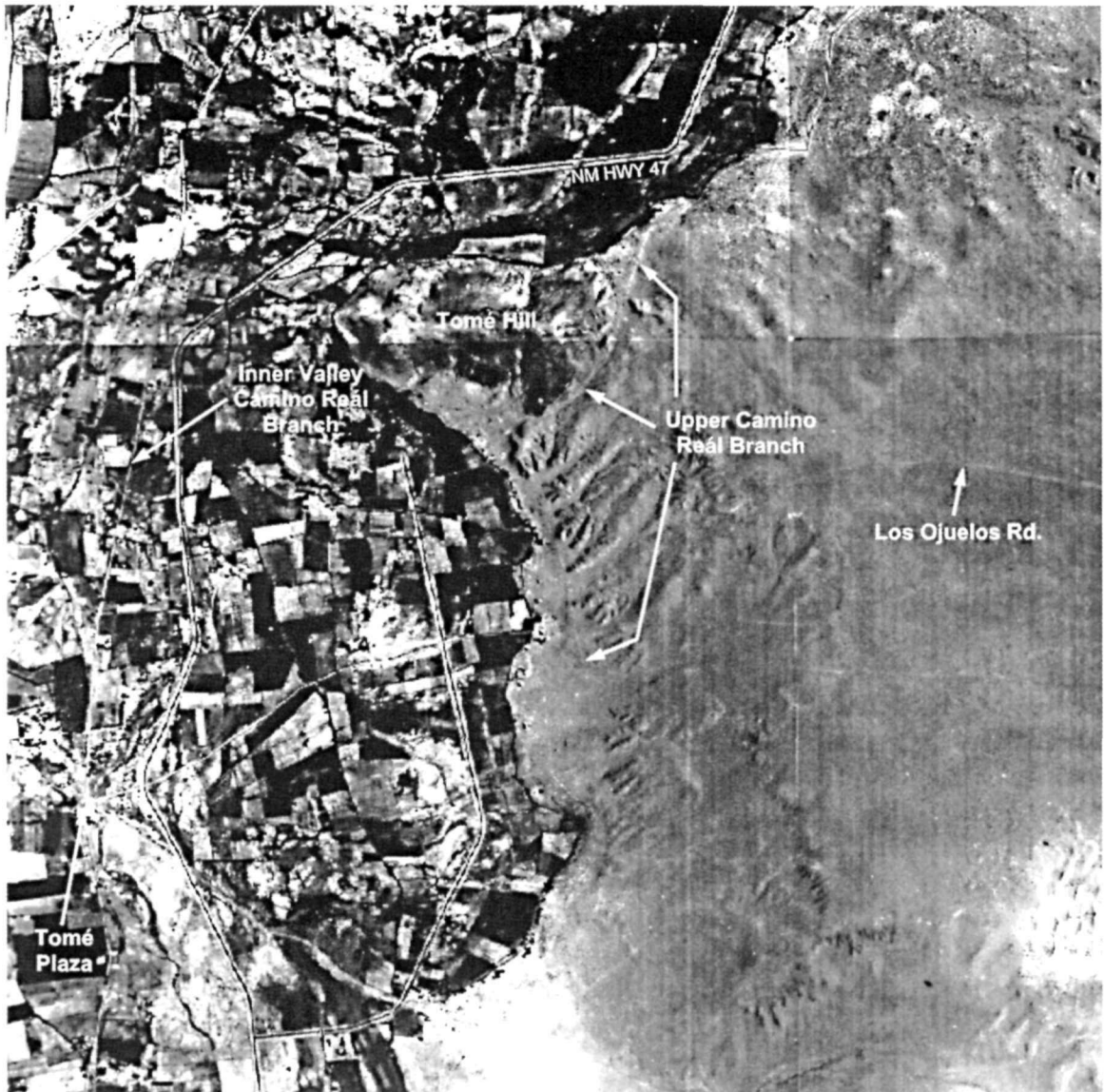


Fig. 17.1

Evidence of the Camino Real visible on 1936 Soil Conservation Service aerial photograph (Scurlock et al. 1995:Fig. 60).

During this period encomienda grants were made to selected men in the Río Arriba and Río Abajo who had served the government. In ca. 1660, one such individual, Tomé Dominguez de Mendoza, received an encomienda for the area south of Isleta Pueblo. He and his family built an estancia or hacienda on the right bank of the Río Grande, west of the hill, which would later be named for the encomendero. Collecting annual tribute from Isleta Pueblo, and successfully ranching and farming, Dominguez de Mendoza's local operation flourished (Chávez 1975:25; Espinosa and Chávez 1967:26). His success, no doubt, was in part due to this strategic location on the Camino Real and his appointment as interim governor in 1666. Some governors and merchants commandeered the supply caravans for purely secular use. The 1666 conducta primarily carried salt from New Mexico back to the Parral mines (Moorhead 1958:34–35).

Some illegal, private trading trips were also made down the Camino by New Mexicans. Captain Cristobal de Anaya, who had married Tomé's sister, Leonor (Chávez 1975:4), was one; when

apprehended by government inspectors, his caravan included eight wagons loaded with goods, and a number of cattle and sheep (Minge 1979:12).

Following the Pueblo Revolt and retreat of the survivors, Spanish traffic through the area all but ceased. Tomé and his family had fled south with other Río Abajo residents, including Isletans. Several reconquest attempts were launched from the new capital at El Paso, including one led by Governor Otermín in late 1681–early 1682. In late December he decided to withdraw and, on January 2, led his troops from Isleta Pueblo down the Camino Real. Marching in very cold weather, with a ground cover of snow, “they halted on the little eminence which is called Tomé” and made camp (Hackett and Shelby 1942:362). This is perhaps the earliest surviving reference to Tomé Hill.

Almost eleven years later, Governor-General Vargas led another reconquest expedition up the Camino Real from El Paso. On September 6, 1692, he and his men camped within sight of the hacienda of Tomé Dominguez. The day’s march of five leagues, traveling north from the abandoned hacienda of Francisco Gomez, had been over a “very sandy” stretch of road. So camp could be made and the men fed, Vargas ordered the trailing supply wagons unloaded and their cargoes transported forward by pack animals (Kessell and Hendricks 1992:375). Traveling two more leagues north over the road on the next day, Vargas camped at the estancia of Juan de Valencia (Kessell and Hendricks 1992:376).

In the following year, when Vargas again led his army northward, as well as colonists for resettlement, he sent the sheep, cattle, and horses ahead to trample the vegetation—grasses, forbs, and shrubs—which had grown up in the ruts. This made the roadway smoother for the settlers and heavily loaded wagons. He also had men ready to repair the road where runoff had gullied its surface at various places along the route (Hendricks 1993:81).

The reopening of the Camino Real and recolonization of parts of the Río Arriba and Río Abajo were successful over the next few years. Trade caravans had resumed, but they originated in Santa Fe and were irregular in schedule, and they were no longer under the auspices of the Franciscan missionaries. One left in May of 1712 (Moorhead 1958:42). The Atrisco grant (1692) and Albuquerque (1706), the former on the west bank and the latter on the east bank road, were the southern limit of settlement until 1739. In this year, some residents of the latter settlement, who could not find enough wood, pasture, or irrigation water and were experiencing problems with trespass across their lands, requested and received the Tomé land grant. The north boundary of the grant extended east-west just above Tomé Hill, between the Manzano Mountains and the Río Grande, and included the Camino Real, which ran along the western edge of the grant (Ellis 1955:91; Espinosa and Chávez n.d.:31, 33, 92). Some genizaros, as well as Spaniards, settled here and at nearby Valencia to protect the Río Abajo frontier. The first settlement on the grant, also named Tomé, was established as a fortified plaza on the west side of the Camino, about one mile southwest of Tomé Hill. Another reason for Spanish resettlement of this area was the fertile bottomlands and extensive upland grasslands which soon supported flourishing crop and sheep raising operations. These helped provision the presidios stretching from El Paso to northern Sonora (Baxter 1987:24, 31; Minge 1979:14–15).

By 1750 there were annual, government-sponsored trains between the provincial capital and Chihuahua, departing in December (Moorhead 1958:42). As previously was the case, members of the clergy accompanied these caravans; Bishop Tamarón of Durango joined the annual train on July 8, 1760. This *conducta* was made up of 22 regular soldiers, 55 Spanish and Indian militia, and 17 other individuals, 429 horses and mules, 28 bulls, and 450 sheep (Adams 1953:299–300). *Efectos de país* for export carried on the road at this time, some undoubtedly produced or gathered in the Tomé area, included sheep, raw wool, wild animal hides, wool blankets, salt, and piñon nuts. Some major

imports included imported fabrics (*bayeta*, silk, *chalcones*), boots, hats, shoes, shirts, medicine, soap, rice, chocolate, sugar, tobacco, liquors (especially El Paso brandy), paper, ink, horses, and mules (Minge 1979:21–22; Moorhead 1958:49).

During the latter half of the eighteenth century a number of ranching-trading operations in the Río Abajo prospered, such as that of Juan Bautista Pino and his two adult sons, residents of the San Clemente area (Snow 1993:140). Another, don Juan Miguel Alvarez del Castillo, whose first two wives were Río Abajenas, traded across the area. He died in 1765 in the home of his son-in-law at Fuenclara, another name for Tomé (Baxter 1987:46–47; Chávez 1975:158–159). Alvarez del Castillo left an array of goods brought up the river from Chihuahua and El Paso, including red cloth, serge, Rouen linen, blue linen, strands of spur silk, lace, ribbon, Puebla sombreros, copper pots, a copper griddle, silk stockings, English shirts, indigo, dye, and sewing needles (Minge 1979:19).

In 1766, Nicolas Lafora, the royal engineer, described the stretch of the Camino Real, or Chihuahua Trail as it was commonly known at the time, between Las Nutrias and Tomé as “a good level road” (Kinnaird 1967:89).

Mail had long been carried by the conductas to Chihuahua and exchanged for incoming mail. Regular mail delivery between El Paso and Santa Fe, separate from the government caravans, was inaugurated over the Camino Real in 1783. At first, mail bags from Santa Fe were dispatched four times a year—on the first day of each April, July, September, and November—and escorted by several officers and a small contingent of soldiers (Simmons 1978:17–18). In 1810, a monthly mail service was begun; mail from the north was exchanged at the Fray Cristobal camp for that from the south (Moorhead 1958:46).

The departure time for private trade caravans was moved to November by the late 1700s, allowing area merchants an opportunity to attend the annual Taos fair held in July or August (see Cunningham and Miller, this volume). After the founding of La Joya de Sevilleta, 24 miles south of Tomé, in 1800, Río Abajo merchants and sheep ranchers began to rendezvous with the train coming down the road from the Río Arriba. Later these caravans of pack mules, carts, and livestock left in August to take advantage of the relatively widespread surface water and good grazing grass resulting from the summer rains (Scurlock 1990:16).

Beginning in 1806 the government-regulated, annual train left Santa Fe before late October so it could arrive in time for the annual fair at the Valle de San Bartolome, Mexico. In March of the following year, some 15,000 sheep, accompanied by about 300 civilians, most of whom were New Mexican ranchers, and escorted by 35 to 40 soldiers, moved down the road (Moorhead 1958:43, 45). The first Anglo-Americans to travel the road south through Tomé, Lt. Zebulon Pike and his men, camped about a mile from the plaza (Coues 1987[II]:628). On the next day, near Socorro, his party and their Spanish military escort passed the encampment of the above caravan.



Fig. 17.2
View looking north of historic trail
(possibly the upper branch of the
Camino Real) east of La Entrada
Road, near Tomé (Scurlock et al.
1995:Fig. 61).

During this period, Tomé had become one of the most important Río Abajo towns along the road. Great fiestas were held on the plaza, and “all the fine people came to trade here” (Fergusson 1945:194). This event, and the brisk traffic down the Camino, spurred sheep raising in the area. Three Tomé ranchers—Christoval Gallegos; Juan Maya, a mestizo; and Don Pedro Pino, then living in the Santa Fe area—were listed in the 1790 census. Other trade-related workers listed in the census were seven weavers, two carders, and two tailors residing in Tomé (Minge 1979:16–21). Among the efectos del pais produced by local weavers and tailors were *sarapes*, *mantas*, *jerga*, *sabanilla*, *frazadas*, and *colchas* (Minge 1979:8–9). Some of the 68 farmers of Tomé were raising punche and cotton, both used in weaving and exported down the trail (Scurlock 1990:16).

In the early 1800s Bartolome Baca established a ranch in the Belen area; he later became alcalde of this settlement, as well as Tomé, and then governor. Here, and later on huge landholdings in the Estancia Valley, he raised large herds of sheep, cattle, and horses (Espinosa and Chávez n.d.:95). Some of his stock were driven south down the trail to the Mexican markets. Baca’s flocks and those of other ranchers in the Tomé area were raided from time to time by Navajo or Apache groups, as were the settlements themselves. To support military campaigns against these raiders, and to redeem captives, Governor Melgares made public appeals for citizen contributions. Some Tomé weavers and tailors responded by making or giving sarapes, and ranchers donated sheep (Minge 1979:20).

With independence won from Spain in 1821, Mexico opened its doors to foreign traders; in late 1821 the first American goods reached Santa Fe via a trail “blazed” from Missouri. Within a few years relatively cheap items such as cotton cloth, linen, thread, buttons, pins, needles, stockings, handkerchiefs, shoes, gloves, suspenders, parasols, combs, mirrors, metal tools, locks, knives, razors, candlesticks, vermilion dye, and various spices not only reached the Santa Fe area, but some went down the trail to communities such as Tomé, and on to Chihuahua. Anglo and Hispano traders who tapped into the Santa Fe trade also brought hides of elk, pronghorn, and beaver south to sell or exchange. Most of these skins and hides were obtained directly from Native Americans in the region, although some traders were also fur trappers, who worked the region for pelts for the Chihuahuan trade, as well as the U.S. market (Minge 1979:25; Weber 1971:57, 120).

From 1821 to 1846, Tomé had one of the two post offices in New Mexico, but service was irregular (Ellis 1955:98). The road may have been repaired during this period as one of the Anglos described the old trail as a “good coach road from Santa Fe through El Paso” (Bowen 1979:7).

One of the annual November caravans leaving Santa Fe, and picking up Río Abajo traders and their goods along the way, was escorted by 500 soldiers and militia as far as El Paso. From here the traders proceeded to Coahuila, Chihuahua, Sonora, or Durango (Jaramillo n.d.:16; Minge 1979:21, 26). In 1832, Pablo Salazar of Tomé drove two flocks of wethers to northern Mexico, making delivery of 3,000 to Chihuahua or Durango, and 1,800 more billed for Puebla (Baxter 1987:103). Manuel A.



Fig. 17.3

Probable section of Camino Real north of Tomé Plaza still used as a road (Scurlock et al. 1995:Fig. 62).

Otero, whose family was from Valencia and later became a resident of La Costancia, down the road from Tomé, was a prominent merchant and livestock owner at this time. He also operated a thriving freight wagon business over the Camino. Otero later built a grist mill at La Costancia and traded for corn and wheat with local residents. His sons, Juan Jose, Manuel, and Antonio, also became successful sheepmen and traders in the Valencia-Tomé area by the 1840s (Espinosa and Chávez n.d.:66, 95; Otero 1987:30, 63–64).

One of Tomé's best-known residents, doña Gertrudis Barcelo, also known as "La Tules," traveled the Chihuahua Trail in the 1830s and 40s to gamble at Mexican fairs, perhaps as far south as San Juan de Los Lagos (see Cook, this volume). Her adopted daughter, Maria del Refugio, married a native Chihuahuan living in Santa Fe. Maria accompanied her trader-merchant husband on a number of trips to southern points, giving birth at least to one child in Chihuahua (Cook 1993:154–155).

Traffic through Tomé increased sharply in the late summer and fall of 1846 as various contingents of U.S. Army troops marched south to attack Mexican troops or to reconnoiter and map the roads and terrain in and around the Río Grande Valley. Some of these contingents stopped at Tomé and local communities to obtain information or to purchase supplies and produce. Officers and soldiers complained about the deep, sandy stretches of the old road in the area, cut up by the iron wheel rims of the heavily loaded wagons and artillery pieces (Scurlock 1990:23–24). General Kearny, himself, led a column down from Albuquerque to Tomé on September 5. Here, he and his men found a religious fiesta in progress at the village. All roads leading to the plaza were crowded with persons walking, riding, or traveling in a variety of animal-drawn conveyances. An estimated 1,500 people crowded the plaza, and that night luminarias on every housetop and the church roof illuminated the festive scene. A Spanish folk comedy was presented, and skyrockets lit the night sky as the church bell was rung. At sunrise, a service was held in the church, followed by a procession led by the priest, both events punctuated by musket fire from participants (Simmons 1982:140–141).

Lt. W. H. Emory, who was part of Kearny's contingent, wrote this description of the popular mode of travel, the two-wheeled carts:

The primitive wagons of the country were used by the women as coaches. These wagons were heavy boxes mounted on wheels cut from large cottonwood; over the top of the box was spread a blanket, and inside were huddled, in a dense crowd, the women, children, pigs, lambs, and "everything that is his." The man of the family usually seated himself on the tongue of the wagon, his time divided between belaboring his beasts and scratching his head. In one of these a violin was being played, and the women were sitting on their feet, made the most of the music by brandishing their bare arms and moving their head to the cadence (Stanley 1966:8).

Artist John Mix Stanley, in Emory's command as a member of the topographic engineers unit, sketched travelers on the road at Valencia, with Tomé Hill (?) in the background (see Figure 25.2). This was produced in lithograph form in Emory's (1848) report to Congress (Weber 1985:9–11, plate XX).

Two years later, a detachment of 20 soldiers from the military post at Albuquerque marched down the trail to Tomé, where they were garrisoned to protect local residents and their herds from Indian raids (Frazer 1983:33; Giese 1976:11). In July of this same year (1850), another illustrator and map maker, Richard Kern, accompanied a military troop that was measuring the road distance from Santa Fe to the new military post at Doña Ana with a viameter. The expedition stopped at Tomé, and Kern sketched the church, the earliest known image of this structure (Weber 1985:128).

From 1852 to 1856 territorial trade fairs were held at several locations along the road, including Tomé, from 1852 to 1856 (Bancroft 1889:644). Traders from the south and north made the trip,

bringing grain, hides, and livestock to trade for local fruit, chile, other agricultural produce, and wine (Brown 1978:72). Isleta Pueblos and local Hispanics also participated in the trade.

During this period, U.S. attorneys were traveling up and down the road and serving in county courts. Perhaps the best known was W. H. H. Davis, who was at the Tomé courthouse in 1853. One of the cases brought before the court during the week he was there consisted of two indictments against an individual for trading without a license, which ended in a “not guilty” verdict (Davis 1982:356–357). In 1857, circuit judge Kirby Benedict, accompanied by Santa Fe Trail trader Franz Huning of Albuquerque, stopped at Tomé to hold court. The two men had traveled down the west branch of the trail and crossed the river to Tomé (Browne 1973:59; Simmons 1982:155).

The year that Tomé’s best known priest, J. B. Ralliere, received a church organ, which was shipped from St. Louis, down the Santa Fe and Chihuahua trails (Ellis 1955:112), the U.S. Topographic Engineers were rebuilding the road to Doña Ana. This improvement work, conducted in 1854–1855, was to benefit the military as well as government mail service (Jackson 1979:109–111, 116–117).

In March 1862, another army marched up the west bank road from Socorro, this being a Confederate invasion force from Texas. They camped near Belen, then crossed the river and proceeded up the old Camino along the east side of the valley (Alberts 1993:201–202). Warned of their approach in late February, residents of the Tomé area rounded up their sheep and cattle and drove them to the Manzano Mountains to conceal them from the Southern troops. Some residents also gathered up their valuables and buried them or carried them away from town. A few even abandoned their homes and fled north to Santa Fe (Simmons 1982:177). The army columns passed through the village and continued northward to Santa Fe and eventually their defeat at Glorieta Pass in late February.

Retreating southward, they split into two forces, one on each branch of the road. The east bank force, which had camped at Pinos, near Peralta, on the night of April 14, was attacked at dawn the next day by Union troops. At Tomé, Father Ralliere and a group of choir and altar boys climbed to the top of Tomé Hill to view the fighting and to sing litanies during the day-long battle. Some local residents thought their actions turned the battle in favor of the Union side (Ellis 1955:113–114). The Confederates withdrew across the river and joined the other column at Los Lunas, and they continued their southward retreat through Belen. The Union army followed, but on the east bank road through Valencia and Tomé (Alberts 1993:200–202).

Normal trade and travel along the Camino quickly resumed, and mounted riders, mule and burro trains, freight wagons, and carriages moved along the road through Tomé. Among these were railroad surveyors, whose presence in 1867 foretold changes in transportation up and down the valley (Bell 1965:241). Several years later, in 1872 or 1873, county workers began long-term work on the Camino near Tomé (Ellis and Baca 1957:261). In 1876 the territorial legislature passed an act declaring this route a public road (Scurlock 1990:30–31).

In 1898 members of the Asociación de los Caballeros de la Misa of the Tomé Church were appointed to repair a local road, El Camino de los Ranchos. The location of this road is unknown (de la Vega 1976:51). Three years later the territorial legislature passed a “tax” law requiring all males from 21 to 60 years of age to work 2 to 5 days a year on their county’s highways. These residents had to furnish their own tools and horse teams. The work on the Camino and other roads was supervised by Valencia County employees (Rose 1992:38–39).

Even though the railroad was extended south from Albuquerque down the west side of the river in the fall of 1880 (Myrick 1970:18, 20), usurping much of the commercial traffic on the Camino, the road remained a relatively significant transportation artery into the next century. The Belen Cutoff of

the Eastern Railway Company, constructed between 1903 and 1907 through Abo Pass, west to the Río Grande and across the river to Belen, diverted even more wheeled traffic from the Tomé area (Myrick 1970:35–37).

On May 20–23, 1905, water from torrential rains “ran along the highway which became an arroyo impossible for travel” (Ellis and Baca 1957:19). In this same year the territorial assembly designated the east road “El Camino Real,” State Road 1; it was rebuilt over the next 12 years with convict labor (Rae et al. 1987:8; Rose 1992:2). The U.S. Highway 85 designation was made in 1926 (Ron Forte, New Mexico State Highway Transportation Department, personal communication 1988). The east road, later designated Highway 47, was rebuilt in 1917 and was first black-topped in 1946 (Kight 1981). In the Tomé area this new road ran just to the east of the old route.

Today, old Highways 47 and 85, now 304 and 314, respectively, carry large volumes of local traffic through Valencia, Tomé, Los Lunas, and Belen. Just to the west, on Interstate 25, cars, buses, and semi-trailer trucks carry passengers and goods up the river to Albuquerque or Santa Fe, or down to Socorro, El Paso, and into Chihuahua. Thus, the heritage of El Camino de Tierra Adentro is “alive” and quite visible along this ancient travel corridor. ♣



Fig. 17.4
Crosses of the Trinity
and shrine on the summit
of Tomé Hill. Photo Robert
Brewer, 1975. From *The
Persistence of Memory*,
New Mexico's Churches,
Steve McDowell, 1990.
Courtesy Museum of
New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.

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Gertrudis Barceló

*Woman Entrepreneur of the Chihuahua
and Santa Fe Trails, 1830–1850*

Mary Jean Cook



TRAVELERS AND TRADERS who crossed the Santa Fe and Chihuahua Trails to Santa Fe, New Mexico, from 1830 to 1850 learned to know the name of la doña Tules, as Gertrudis Barceló was called. Not only did these men know her, they felt compelled to write about her in their diaries, journals, and newspapers. They often omitted any mention of the gambler and reputed prostitute in a congressional report to Washington or in a letter to their wives at home. Gertrudis Barceló during her lifetime of approximately fifty years achieved fame and wealth from various professions, the least known of which was commerce.

Of Sonoran birth and Catalán heritage, Tules (the diminutive of Gertrudis) was an expert monte player who reigned as the grand dame of Santa Fe until her death in January 1852. Monte was a card game of pure chance, and gambling was a consuming pastime of traders on the Santa Fe and Chihuahua Trails. A \$10,000 stake was not uncommon, and gamblers were known to have covered as much as \$40,000 in a single bet. The unlucky left Santa Fe destitute. Others left temporarily broke, but vowing to return to gamble with the exclamation, “Wake Snakes! Hail Columbia! I’m off for California to-morrow! and, I say, old lady, I’ll see you again in the fall!” (Allison 1915; Sunder 1960:212).

By the 1830s, a decade or more after William Becknell, father of the Santa Fe Trail, had made his historic horseback journey into New Mexico, Gertrudis Barceló had accumulated sufficient money to purchase an adobe residence, plus several other pieces of Santa Fe property. One of these properties included her large and notorious gambling *sala* on Santa Fe’s narrow Burro Alley (Cook n.d.).

No evidence has been found that Gertrudis Barceló herself ever traveled the Santa Fe Trail, but her money was indeed carried across it to the east for investment purposes. Tules often traveled the Camino Real, beginning in 1816. She first arrived in New Mexico in the village of Valencia, south of Albuquerque, as a young girl.¹ In later years, she gambled in Chihuahua and perhaps other Mexican towns farther south, moving in influential military and social circles, and returning with silver and gold for her monte games in Santa Fe.

For centuries New Mexico had been a bartering society. And since there were no banks in Santa Fe in the early 1800s, doña Tules played the unique role of banker at her monte table at night and benevolent banker to the poor and hungry during the day. Such generosity to the needy, she believed,



Fig. 18.1
Doña Tules portrait sketch.
From Harper's New Monthly
Magazine, April 1854.

would guarantee her a better life in the hereafter.

Litigation occupied a part of Tules's daily routine. She borrowed money; she sued to collect gambling debts, and was sued for non-repayment by the wealthy Spanish merchant Manuel Alvarez. When a neighbor complained to the *alcalde* (mayor) that Tules was cohabiting with an Anglo, Tules took the offensive. Despite early New Mexico's sexual license, adultery was not only frowned upon, it was illegal. The neighbor capitulated, and both women then signed an act of conciliation. Soon, Tules was back in the *alcalde* court demanding an apology from another woman for unnamed slander.

Lacking education, few women of the era were capable of signing their own names. On legal documents, though in a childlike scrawl, Gertrudis Barceló signed her name followed by her rubric, rather than using an "X." Her literacy may have been limited to this endeavor only. She employed prominent Anglo-American lawyers to plead her cases in court, requesting a change of venue if necessary, and to execute her will.²

As a wife and mother, Tules enjoyed a contemporary arrangement with her husband, Manuel Antonio Sisneros. He and their servants took care of their adopted daughters when she was out of town on business for months at a time. The notorious gambler jealously guarded her daughters' reputations against the aggressive Anglo traders and soldiers who frequented her *sala* and home.

Josiah Gregg, who vividly but not always accurately described commerce on the Santa Fe Trail, wrote about Gertrudis Barceló:

The following will not only serve to show the light in which gambling is held by all classes of society, but to illustrate the purifying effects of wealth upon character. . . . Fortune, at first, did not seem inclined to smile upon her efforts, and for some years she spent her days in lowliness and misery. At last her luck turned, as gamblers would say, and one occasion she left the bank with a spoil of several hundred dollars! This enabled her to open a bank of her own, and being favored by a continuous run of good fortune, she gradually rose higher and higher in the scale of affluence, until she found herself in possession of a very handsome fortune. In 1843, she sent to the United States some ten thousand dollars to be invested in goods. . . (Moorhead 1954:168).

It appears that Gregg was correct about the \$10,000 which Tules sent across the Santa Fe Trail. Records show that the Chihuahua-born trader and son-in-law of doña Tules, Santiago Flores, traveled the Santa Fe Trail with a group of traders to Independence, Missouri, in May 1843 (Barry 1972:475). Three months later, in August, President Antonio López de Santa Anna issued a decree declaring the customs houses in northern Chihuahua, Paseo del Norte (El Paso), and Taos closed to foreign trade.

The timing of the shipment of Tules's money on an 1843 spring caravan to the east may have reflected prior knowledge of the impending Mexican mandate against foreign trade. In December 1842 she had written from Chihuahua to her friend and one-time business associate in Santa Fe, Mexican Governor Manuel Armijo, telling of her invitation to attend a reception in honor of Gen. José Mariano Monterde, the new commanding general of Chihuahua. Then, upon her return to Santa Fe in early 1843, she proceeded to send her money out of the country.³ One year earlier the Mexican government had also prohibited importation of fifty different articles and exportation of gold and

silver bullion, ore, or dust, yet doña Tules did so in 1843 (Bieber 1931:25).

The 1843 Missouri-bound caravan traveled the “lower trace” (meaning the Cimarron Cutoff) to the Arkansas River to avoid marauders. The wagon train was composed of 180 men (largely Mexican traders), 42 wagons, and 1,200 mules. According to various reports, the bullion carried by the Mexican traders totaled at least \$250,000, possibly as much as \$300,000. An earlier train that year from Santa Fe carrying a large amount of specie and bullion had been robbed and trader Antonio José Chávez murdered by *banditti* (Barry 1972:475; Simmons 1987:29).

Some of the Mexican traders in 1843 traveled on from Missouri to New York City, so quite possibly some or all of Tules’s \$10,000 may have reached merchants on the East Coast or even across the Atlantic Ocean. Trade on both the Santa Fe and Chihuahua trails was international in scope, with some funds eventually reaching Europe. Nevertheless, a search for records of purchases made in New York with money belonging to doña Tules has not been successful.

New Mexico documents show that Tules speculated in Mexican mules. Some of the 1,200 mules in the 1843 caravan possibly belonged to her. Mexican mules were sometimes taken from Chihuahua to as far as the East Coast of the United States for sale. And because they were wild mules, Mexican *arrieros* or muleteers were required to accompany them.⁴

Doña Tules did not lack for trusted family couriers to transport her money and goods to and from Missouri or Mexico, though it seems apparent from her 1850 will that she did not completely trust her son-in-law, Santiago Flores. The will bequeathed to Refugio and Delfinea Flores, Santiago’s wife and daughter, . . . one-third of all Tules’s money—*provided* that Santiago Flores maintain, educate, clothe and support another adopted daughter named Rallitos Gutiérrez.⁵

From Mexican baptismal records we learn that wives and families of traders also traveled the trails. María Refugio Flores, for example, gave birth to several babies in Santa Fe and at least one child in Chihuahua (Cook 1993:155).

James M. Giddings, an American from Fayetteville, Missouri, who first came to Santa Fe in the 1830s, was also a trader son-in-law of doña Tules. Giddings had married the mother of Rallitos, though he was not the biological father. Both Flores and Giddings were fluent in English and Spanish.

Fig. 18.2
Gambling saloon in Santa Fe.
From Harper’s New Monthly
Magazine, April 1854.



Arrival of the U.S. Army in Santa Fe in 1846 at the beginning of the Mexican War brought several significant events in the life of Tules. Among other prominent Santa Fe citizens, she was invited to attend the elaborate *bailes* (balls) and dinners, including one for Col. Sterling Price, Commander of the Second Missouri Regiment of Mounted Infantry. In August 1846 after a bloodless invasion, Brig. Gen. Stephen Watts Kearny entertained the citizens of Santa Fe with a fandango at La Fonda (on the site of today's eponymous hotel). Included on an itemized list of expenses incurred and billed to the U. S. Army were playing cards at \$4.50. Gambling was a part of everyday Santa Fe life, with women and children standing elbow-to-elbow with the clergy at a game of chance.

Colonel Price suffered ill health upon his arrival in Santa Fe in 1846, but health was no deterrent to his paying a visit to the gambling *sala* of Madame T, according to one soldier's diary. More fortunate than most, Price walked away with small winnings. Or did the doña let him win to gain his favor in return for future services as a commanding officer? A number of officers frequented the notorious Burro Alley gambling establishment in the winter of 1846–1847. Tules also rented part of her house to some of these officers, according to U. S. Army Quartermaster records.⁶

In November 1846 when specie was difficult to obtain in Santa Fe, a much-heralded financial liaison occurred between Gertrudis Barceló and the handsome and erudite Lt. Col. David Dawson Mitchell. He needed money to finance an expedition of an elite group of men to travel to Chihuahua to fight the Mexican War. Richard Smith Elliott (alias John Brown), a reporter for the St. Louis *Daily Reveille*, wrote that in return for a \$1,000 loan from Tules, Mitchell agreed to escort her to a theatrical soirée in the Palace of the Governors. The play they attended together, performed by the Laclede Rangers of the Missouri Volunteers, turned out to be the first Anglo-American play ever staged in New Mexico. The play, *Pizarro*, was performed in English though the majority of the Santa Fe audience neither understood nor spoke it (Cook 1994).

Col. Sterling Price didn't forget the \$1,000 loan made by Tules to Colonel Mitchell or any other favors she might have bestowed. Price furnished an Army escort for her as she traveled to the village of Manzano and points south in April 1847, returning in May. A Santa Fe merchant complained that "through gallantry or *otherwise*," Tules had obtained from Price "what the governor and the other most respectable citizens could not obtain from him, and what she never could obtain of the most profligate of the late Mexican commanders."⁷

According to local rumors, it had been the notorious woman gambler named Tules who had revealed the 1846 Christmas Eve plot by well-known Santa Feans, some of whom were her neighbors, to overthrow the Americans. The revolt occurred in January 1847 with the scalping of Gov. Charles Bent in Taos. The uprising was quelled by the U.S. Army, but Bent's bloody death meant that the first American government in New Mexico had failed.

In addition to her manipulative charms, doña Tules was Santa Fe's best and most expensively dressed woman, lavishly spending money on silks, satins, and calicos. She wore three heavy gold chains around her neck, to one of which was attached a crucifix. It was her stylishness of dress that led a reporter of the New Orleans *Picayune* in 1839 to call her Señora Toulouse, describing her as a French *modiste*. As a consumer in spending money for clothing and luxuries brought across the Santa Fe and Chihuahua trails, Tules had no parallel. A likeness of her with a *cigarrito* dangling from her mouth appeared in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* in 1854, following her death.

Doña Tules dressed tastefully and elegantly for parties, setting the fashion trend for other Santa Fe señoras, but she wore an entirely different garb for gambling. She "dressed down" in a loose-fitting ensemble, apparently divesting herself of uncomfortable and distracting clothing and jewelry. Long hours of sitting at a gambling table and using intense concentration demanded simply comfort. One observer noted her mannerisms as she gambled:

The notorious Madame Toolay nightly displays her glittering piles of gold and silver at Monte (one of the favorite games here). It is amusing to observe her manoeuvres during the progress of the game. When fortune favors her[,] her keen small black eyes seem about to start from (their) sockets, and a melancholy smile (covers) her wrinkled mouth when (losing).⁸

Of interest is that doña Tules may well be considered an early patroness of professional music in Santa Fe. In 1849 the owners of the old La Fonda traveled to Chihuahua to hire bartenders, waiters, and musicians. One of the musicians, an expert harpist, was brought across the Chihuahua Trail at the request (and perhaps expense) of “doña Tules Barcelona” (McNitt 1968:184; Allison 1915:401–402).

The influence of Gertrudis Barceló on nineteenth-century Santa Fe, perhaps more importantly on the women of New Mexico, and also on trappers, traders, merchants, the Mexican Army, the American Army, governors, generals, Santa Fe real estate, revolts, assassinations, a Catholic bishop known as Jean Baptiste Lamy, and last but not least, commerce, is yet to be fully told. There is no question that Gertrudis Barceló has no peer in nineteenth-century New Mexican history. Her legend is alive and well today in several novels, the best known of which is *The Wind Leaves No Shadow* by Ruth Laughlin. More recently, doña Tules was the subject of a musical production staged at Expo '92 in Seville, Spain. Nevertheless, truth is far more compelling than fiction. ♣

NOTES

1. The Barceló name first appears (as godparents [*padrinos*]) in the baptismal records of the Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, Tomé Baptisms, May 1816.
2. *Manuel Alvarez vs. James Giddings, et al.*, case file 230, District Court Records (1850), Santa Fe County, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives [NMSRCA]; Book of Judicial Conciliations, Jusgado 1°, Santa Fe (1835), Mexican Archives of New Mexico [MANM] roll 20, fr. 131, and Book of Proceedings, Jusgado 2°, Santa Fe (1835), MANM roll 20, fr. 472.
3. Governor's Letterbook, MANM roll 33, fr. 593.
4. Francisco Robledo to Manuel Alvarez, 22 April 1846, Alvarez Papers, folder 17, NMSRCA.
5. Santa Fe County Records, Probate Court Case File 1005, No. 87.
6. Statement of buildings rented by the Quartermaster's Department at the Post of Santa Fe, New Mexico, 32nd Congress, 1st Session, House Executive Document 2, p. 242.
7. Journal of Henry G. A. Caspers, Collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association, St. Louis, Missouri; Real Collection I:256, NMSRCA.
8. Dr. J. N. Dunlap Diary, Misc. Letters and Diaries, NMSRCA.

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The Mexican War and the Chihuahua Trail

The Doniphan and Price Expeditions

Mark L. Gardner



THE STATE OF CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO, was conquered by U.S. forces during the Mexican War in two separate campaigns. The first was immediately hailed as perhaps the most extraordinary feat of the war. Four of its veterans published books about the expedition shortly after their return home, and it has captured the attention of numerous writers since, from historians such as Bernard DeVoto to the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Robert Lewis Taylor. The second campaign, however, although remarkable in its own right, slipped quickly into obscurity. No books championed its accomplishments, and it has rarely been examined by historians. With the 150th anniversary of the Mexican War now here, both expeditions are worthy of another look.

The Chihuahua expedition of Col. Alexander W. Doniphan and his First Regiment Missouri Mounted Volunteers was not designed to be an epic march of conquest. In late September of 1846, General Stephen Watts Kearny was preparing to depart Santa Fe for upper California with his dragoon regiment. Because additional volunteers were on the way to New Mexico, plenty to garrison the newly conquered territory, he issued an order directing Doniphan to march his regiment south to join Brigadier General John E. Wool in Chihuahua as soon as the Second Regiment Missouri Volunteers under Sterling Price arrived in Santa Fe. Although Wool was not then in Chihuahua, he had been ordered to mount a campaign in that direction from Texas, and it was expected that his force would easily take Chihuahua's capital before Doniphan could arrive there with his regiment (Connelley 1907:250–251; Cutts 1965:252.).

Doniphan's start was delayed by an order from Kearny sent on October 2. It instructed Doniphan to deal first with the Navajo Indians, who were continuing their depredations against the New Mexicans, something Kearny had promised would end under American rule. Doniphan's subsequent campaign into the Navajo country resulted in a tenuous treaty with that tribe on November 22 and, four days later, a treaty between the Navajo and Zuni. Having thus completed his assignment, Doniphan now turned his attention again to Chihuahua (Connelley 1907:266–267, 307, 311).

About December 10, Doniphan reached Valverde, near the entrance to the famous Jornada del Muerto, where he planned to rendezvous his regiment in preparation for the march south (Connelley 1907:85, 363). Already camped there and in the vicinity was a large merchant caravan of



Fig. 19.1

Col. Alexander W. Doniphan,
commander of the First Regiment
Missouri Mounted Volunteers.
From Doniphan's Expedition,
John T. Hughes, Cincinnati: 1850.

approximately 300 wagons. These overland traders had been stalled at Valverde since mid-October, unwilling to travel farther south until hearing of Chihuahua's capture. Those that had decided to risk the journey, however, were prevented from doing so by one of Doniphan's officers, who had forced them to await the arrival of his commander. Fearful that the goods these traders carried might assist the enemy, Doniphan ordered the caravan to follow in the rear of his army. Many, the American traders in particular, actually welcomed the protection the military would afford their expedition (Gardner 1993:30–32, 66 n. 132).

Before leaving Valverde, Doniphan's force was augmented by a detachment of troops from Santa Fe dubbed the Chihuahua Rangers. This squadron of 95 men was an escort for Lieutenant Colonel David D. Mitchell, who had been ordered by Price on November 17 to open a communication with Chihuahua. Mitchell and his Rangers would continue as a part of Doniphan's command (Edwards 1847:71, 75; Bieber 1935:292–293, 371). Doniphan had no certain information at this time regarding Wool. According to one account, an unconfirmed report had been received that Wool's expedition to Chihuahua had been abandoned (Bieber 1936:214). He also learned that a Mexican force had been sent to defend El Paso. Consequently, Doniphan sent orders to Colonel Price at Santa Fe requesting him to send Captain Richard H. Weightman's company of light artillery, part of the St. Louis artillery battalion commanded by Major Meriwether Lewis Clark, to join his expedition (Connelley 1907:360–362, 377 n. 94). Doniphan had apparently determined to "take Chihuahua" if necessary (Connelley 1907:85).

Doniphan started his force, now numbering 856 men, across the Jornada in detachments beginning on December 14. Doniphan himself began five days later. The Missourians re-grouped at Doña Ana about December 23, and the entire command resumed the march to El Paso the following day. On Christmas, the vanguard of Doniphan's small army, numbering approximately 500 men, made camp about 3:00 P.M. at a place called Brazito, on the east bank of the Rio Grande (Connelley 1907:367–369, 377 n. 94). A Mexican horse had been captured earlier that day, and Doniphan was



Fig. 19.2

Doniphan's troops
marching through the
Jornada del Muerto.
From Journal of
William H. Richardson,
New York: 1848.

in the midst of a card game to determine who among the advance guard responsible for seizing the animal should own it when a suspicious-looking dust cloud was seen on the horizon. Doniphan finished his hand and then “got up and took another look at the dust, and turning to his staff said, ‘By God, that looks forked! Come, mount your horses and be off to see what causes it.’” At the same moment he ordered his men to be drawn up on foot in preparation for battle, and the bugle call for assembly began to sound through the camp (Bieber 1936:229).

Out of the dust appeared Mexican troops. The Missourians formed a line with the river at their backs, and the Mexican army, composed of both regulars and national guard, faced them on their front and flanks with about half a mile separating the opposing lines (Connelley 1907:371, 377 n. 94). This Mexican force, commanded by Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Ponce de León, numbered from 500 to more than 1,000 men (accounts vary) and included one piece of artillery, a 2-pound howitzer, placed at the center of their line (Smith 1919[1]:301–302, 518 n. 5; Gallaher 1928:386–387). The dashing appearance of the Mexican soldiers awed many of the Missouri volunteers. Frank S. Edwards wrote of “their cavalry in bright scarlet coats with bell buttons, and snow-white belts, carrying polished sabres and carbines and long lances, with red and green pennons, while their heads were protected by brass helmets with large black plumes” (Edwards 1847:84).

As the two armies faced each other, a Mexican officer rode out carrying a black flag decorated with skulls and cross-bones and requested that Doniphan meet with his commander. This was sharply refused, whereupon the officer warned that they “neither ask nor give quarters” and then quickly galloped back to his ranks. The Mexican line immediately began to advance, firing on the Missourians when closing to 400 yards (Connelley 1907:373, 375 n. 93, 377 n. 94). But the Mexican volleys were high, most of their balls whistling over the heads of Doniphan’s volunteers (Edwards 1847:84; Smith 1919:302). Doniphan ordered the men of his right wing to lie down and hold their fire until the enemy was closer, an action that caused some Mexicans to believe they were inflicting heavy casualties. When the order to fire did come, the resulting volleys were deadly and completely broke up the Mexican offensive. A dragoon charge upon the baggage wagons on the American left was also repulsed. Ponce de Leon’s force was thoroughly routed, and his lone howitzer captured (Connelley 1907:374–375; Edwards 1847:85–86).



Fig. 19.3
Charge of Mexican
dragoons at the Battle
of Brazito, December 25,
1846. From *The History
of Mexico and Its Wars*,
John Frost, New Orleans:
1882.

The Battle of Brazito, as it came to be called, lasted roughly thirty minutes. Seven of Doniphan's men were wounded, none seriously. Of the Mexicans, volunteer John T. Hughes wrote that they "lost 45 dead on the field, 5 prisoners, and doubtless 150 wounded, among whom was their commanding officer" (Duncan 1991:22).¹ El Paso, just 25 miles away, was now open to Doniphan, and he occupied the town on December 27. Here the Missouri colonel learned that Wool "had not advanced upon the capital" and consequently decided to wait on the artillery he had ordered while at Valverde before continuing down the Chihuahua Trail. This detachment, under the command of Major Clark, arrived at El Paso on February 1, and Doniphan started his column on the march seven days later (Connelley 1907:378, n. 94.). He took with him local priest Ramón Ortiz, considered "the head of the anti-American party," and a few others as "hostages for the future good behavior of the inhabitants of El Paso" (Bieber 1935:313; Connelley 1907:397) (see Chapter 20, this volume).

Having been virtually assured by various reports that his advance would be contested at some point, Doniphan took the extra precaution of ordering the American traders and teamsters with the merchant caravan to organize two companies of infantry (see Chapter 21). They mustered approximately 150 men and elected trader Samuel C. Owens as their major (Gardner 1993:33, 155 n. 98, 176 n. 5). With the 117 men of Major Clark's artillery, this brought the total fighting strength of Doniphan's command to over 1,100 men. And Doniphan now had the cannon for which he had waited more than a month, a battery consisting of two 12-pound howitzers and four 6-pounders (Connelley 1907:423–424; Duncan 1991:24; Smith 1919[1]:303).

The column left the Río Grande about fifty miles below El Paso on February 14 and during the course of the next several days endured two jornadas, blistering wind, and a sweeping wildfire that nearly overtook some of the wagons (Connelley 1907:99–103, 404). On February 27 Doniphan's procession encamped on a plain about 20 miles from Rancho de Sacramento, where they knew an entrenched Mexican army was waiting (Robinson 1932:73–74). The next day his force moved out with the merchant wagons and those of the military arranged in four parallel columns approximately 30 feet apart. Marching within these columns were the artillery and most of the First Missouri. Three companies, including the Chihuahua Rangers, served as a mask in front of the command. This arrangement made a "sort of moving fortification" and concealed the strength of the American army (Connelley 1907:407; Furber 1849:447–448; Gardner 1993:188).

Doniphan came in sight of the Mexican defenses at noon. The road to Chihuahua ascended a plateau between the Sacramento River and a dry tributary, the Arroyo Seco, and along the rocky edge of high ground rising off this plateau the Mexicans had constructed 28 redoubts and entrenchments, effectively commanding the road and, seemingly, all approaches. The Mexican army intently watching the Missourians was commanded by General José A. Heredia and numbered roughly 4,200 men (only a fraction were Mexican regulars) with "ten brass cannon ranging from 4-pounders to 9-pounders, and nine musketoons." Heredia's troops were soon surprised by what they saw. Informed by a quick reconnaissance of the terrain by Major Clark, Doniphan abruptly turned his wagon columns off the road to the right about a mile and a half from the Mexican position. The soldiers furiously cut down the banks of the nearby arroyo with spades and pickaxes, and wagons and men plunged across it and then began the climb to the top of the plateau (Connelley 1907:407–409; Edwards 1847:111; Smith 1919:306).

Heredia sent forward his cavalry or lancers, numbering approximately 1,000, in an attempt to stop this bold move, but it was too late (one Missouri volunteer said the Mexicans advanced at a trot). Doniphan was able to form a line of battle on the plateau to meet the cavalry, which halted about 900 yards from the Missourians. Heredia himself was endeavoring to position his artillery and infantry on the new front when the American guns opened up on his lancers. After three murderous rounds cut

SKETCH of the **BATTLE of SACRAMENTO.**

Feb. 28th 1847.

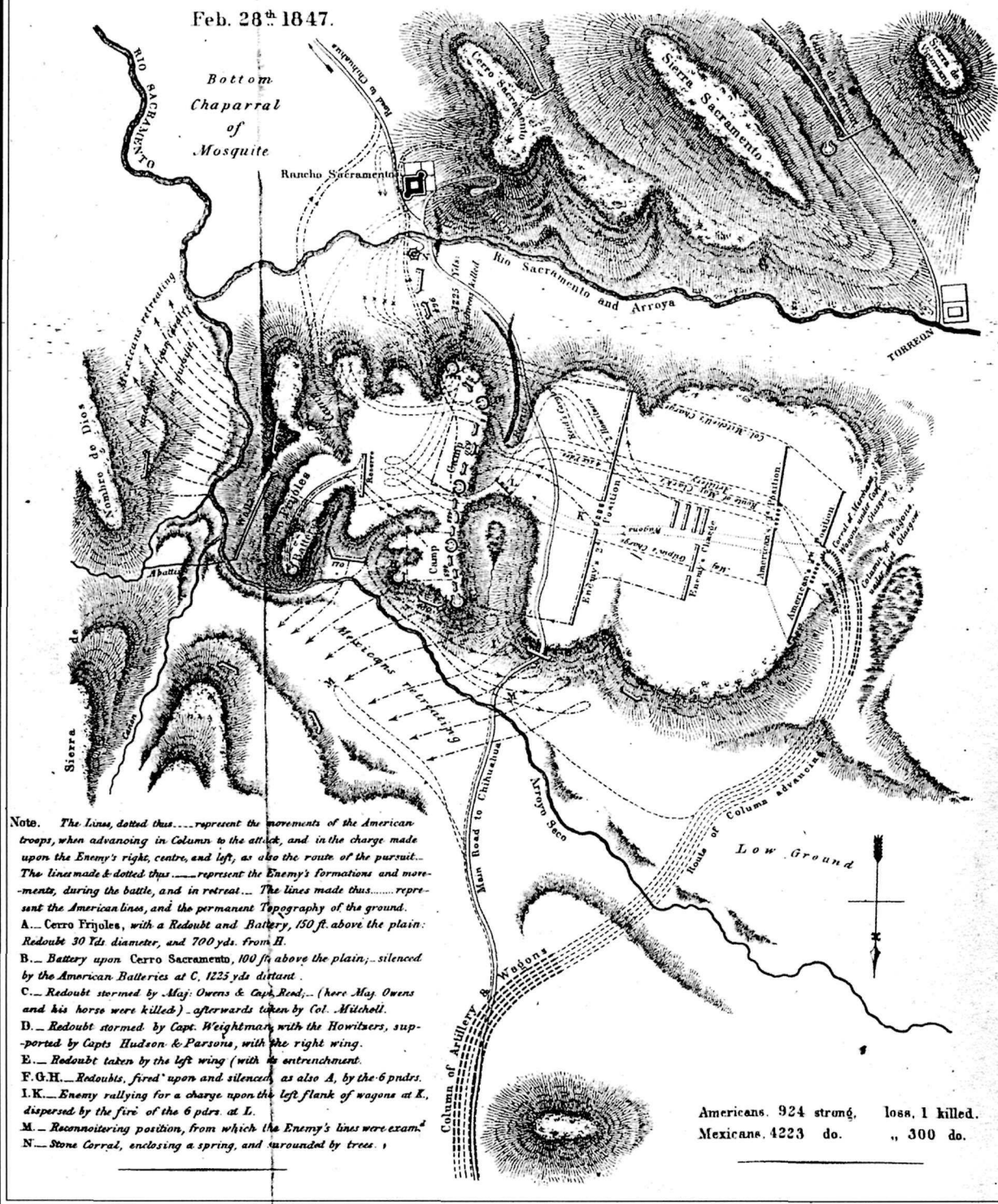


Fig. 19.4

Official sketch of the Battle of Sacramento, February 28, 1847.

From Senate Executive Document No. 1, 30th Congress, 1st session, serial 503.

through their ranks, the horsemen fled to the rear of the Mexican cannon. Now began an artillery duel which lasted fifty minutes. Because of the poor quality of the Mexican blackpowder, their balls generally fell short and then bounced several times before reaching the American line, allowing the volunteers time to jump out of their path. The American artillery, however, was wreaking havoc on the other side, and Heredia eventually withdrew to his fortifications. Doniphan advanced to within 400 yards of the redoubts and then ordered Captain Weightman to charge with the two howitzers, to be supported by three companies he had designated as cavalry (the rest of his command was dismounted for the engagement) (Report of José A. Heredia, March 2, 1847, in an anonymous 1847 publication; Robinson 1932:74–75; Johnston et al. 1936:262; Connelley 1907:409–410, 430–431).

The charge did not go off smoothly, for at first only Captain John W. Reid's company went forward with the howitzers. Then it faltered when the First Missouri's adjutant mistakenly ordered a halt. Captain Reid and a few others, either not hearing the order or ignoring it, raced on towards one of the redoubts. Samuel Owens of the Traders Battalion rode up to the rim of a battery and fired point blank into the Mexicans until he was shot down and lanced. Reid called back to his men, who had halted, to join him in storming the position. About twenty-five did, and according to one account, they took the battery yet were quickly pushed back. But by this time the howitzers had unlimbered within fifty yards of the works and began throwing shells into it as the other mounted companies arrived and surged up the slope to Reid's left. The rest of Reid's company also charged, and the

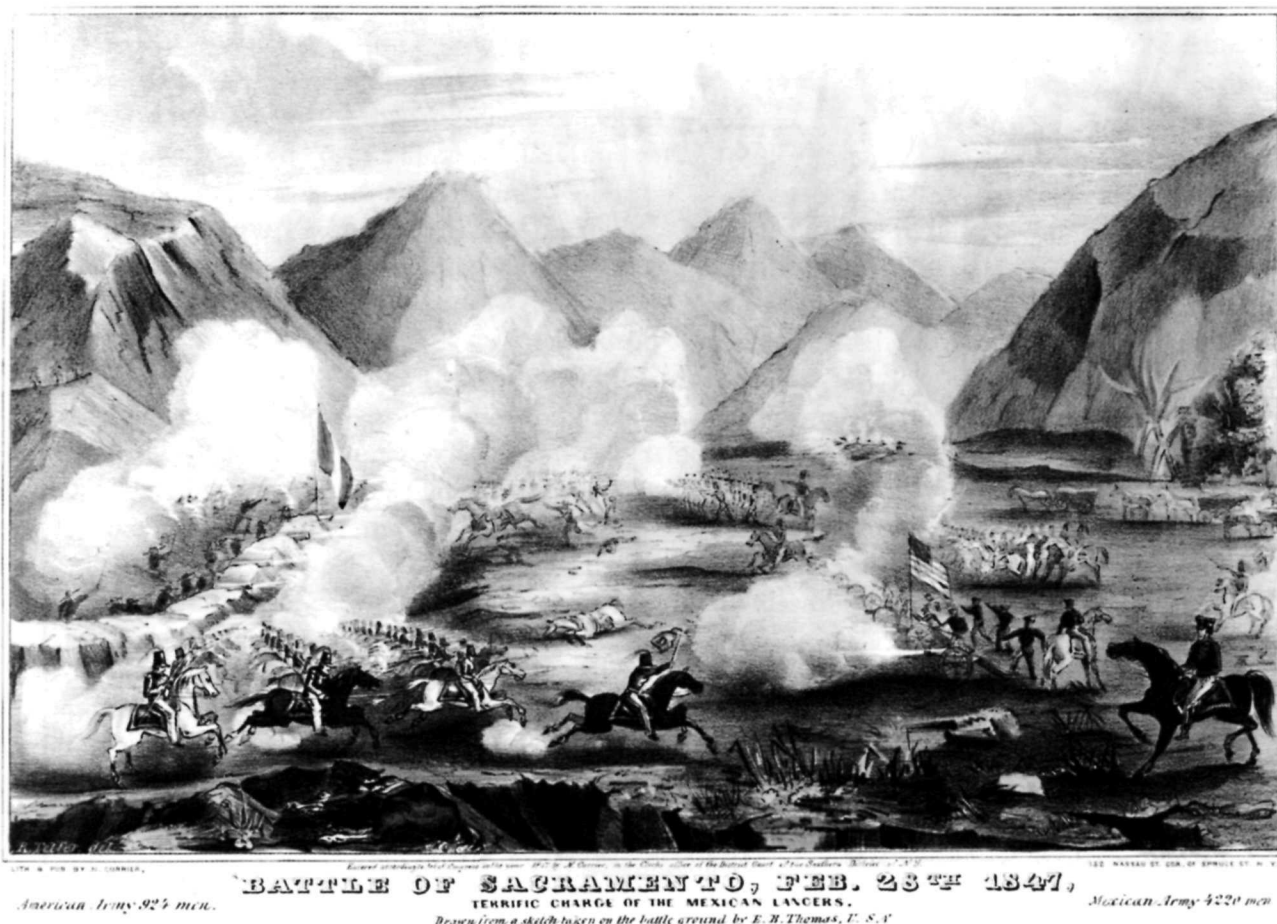


Fig. 19.5

An 1847 lithograph of the Battle of Sacramento by N. Currier, based on a "sketch taken on the battle ground" by Private Elihu B. Thomas. Library of Congress 19862 262-5222 0-4.

Mexicans abandoned this section of their defenses for good. The balance of Doniphan's command, including the remaining artillery, had followed the initial charge and was now attacking the other fortifications. Furiously pushed from their entrenchments, Heredia's force scattered and fled in terror to the mountains, closely pursued by Doniphan's men until darkness fell over the battlefield.²

The wagon columns had followed close behind Doniphan as he advanced along the plateau, ready to serve as fortifications in the event that the Missourians were repulsed. But they were not needed, nor was the Traders Battalion ever called into the fray. They did receive their share of shot and shell, however. Five of one trader's oxen, not as adept at dodging cannonballs as the men, were killed, and at one point during the battle a body of about 300 Mexican lancers tried to make an attack on the wagon caravan but quickly found themselves the target of a well-aimed round of "grape and spherical case-shot" from the American 6-pounders under Major Clark (Gardner 1993:169–170, 188–189; Connelley 1907:435, n. 109).

The only American killed on the battlefield at Sacramento was merchant Samuel Owens. Doniphan had a total of eleven wounded; three of them later died. Heredia, according to his own estimate, lost not less than 80 to 100 killed or wounded. Doniphan put the figure at "300 killed and the same number wounded, many of whom have since died, and forty prisoners." The Mexicans also lost all their provisions, artillery, "six thousand dollars in specie, 50,000 head of sheep, 1,500 head of cattle, 100 mules, 20 wagons, 25 or 30 caretas, 25,000 pounds of ammunition, . . . 100 stand of small colors, 7 fine carriages, the general's scrutoire, and many other things of less note" (Connelley 1907:415–416; Report of José A. Heredia, 36).

Doniphan sent a detachment to take possession of Chihuahua the morning following the battle. On March 2 he entered the city with the rest of his command and the merchant and military wagons "to the tunes of 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Hail Columbia.'" A few days later, Doniphan announced his plans to evacuate Chihuahua in a week, which threw the merchants into a panic, as it would be virtually impossible for them to sell off the \$1 million worth of goods they had brought there in such a short time. They prevailed upon Doniphan to attempt a treaty with the Chihuahua government, then at Parral, which would guarantee their safety after he left. When the treaty negotiations failed, Doniphan decided to leave the decision to General Wool, and an express left Chihuahua for Saltillo on March 20 (Connelley 1907:421–422; Gardner 1993:33–36).³

In his dispatch to Wool, Doniphan stated his desire to join Wool's command before the term of enlistment expired for his regiment. "I am anxious and willing to protect the merchants as far as practicable," he wrote, "but I protest against remaining here as a mere wagon-guard, to garrison a city with troops wholly unfitted for it, and who will soon be wholly ruined by improper indulgences" (Connelley 1907:455). The Chihuahuans undoubtedly shared his sentiments. Susan Magoffin, wife of trader Samuel Magoffin, wrote in her diary that she saw Chihuahua

filled with Missouri volunteers who though good to fight are not careful at all how much they soil the property of a friend much less an enemy. The good citizens of Chi. had never dreamed I dare say that their loved homes would be turned into quarters for common soldiers, their fine houses many of them turned into stables, the rooves made kitchens of, their public *pila* [drinking fountain] used as a bathing trough, the fine trees of their beautiful *alamador* [*alameda*—public walk] barked and forever spoiled, and a hundred other deprivations equal to any of these, but yet all has been done (Drumm 1926:228–229).

Sometime after the departure of the express, Doniphan determined to march on Parral and "root out the Mexican Congress." On April 5 he left for that place with 600 of his men and 14 cannon. Four

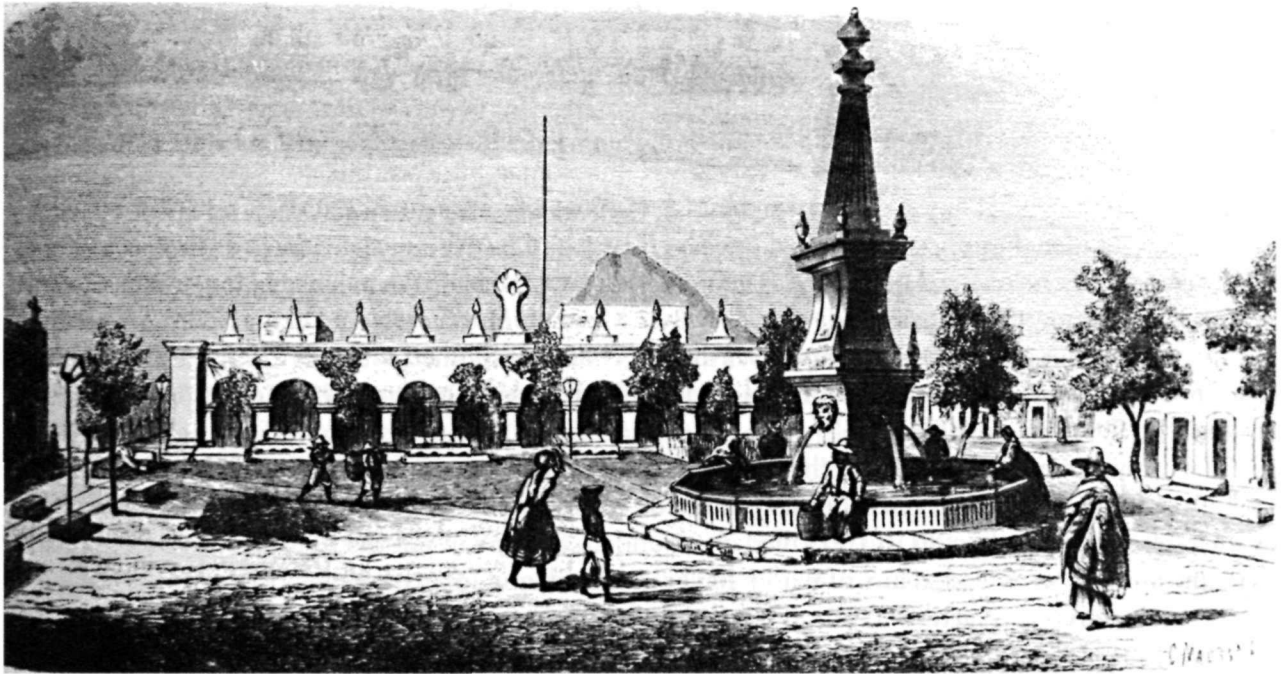


Fig. 19.6

*The fountain in Chihuahua City's Plaza de la Constitución from a sketch by M. Rondé, 1849.
From Le Tour du Monde [Librairie Hachette, Paris] 1861.*

days later, however, he received a report that a large Mexican army was advancing from Durango to retake Chihuahua. Doniphan ordered a return (Connelley 1907:464; Gardner 1993:117–118, 156–157, n. 112). “This is the first retrograde movement we have made,” wrote volunteer Marcellus Ball Edwards in his journal, “and the Mexicans are already laughing us to scorn; and even the women throw it at us, forgetting the example set by their own troops” (Bieber 1936:277). The report of the Mexican army was soon proven false.

On April 23 the express finally returned to Chihuahua. It brought orders from Zachary Taylor for Doniphan’s command to join his troops at Saltillo. “As for the traders,” read the orders, “they may, at their option, remain in Chihuahua, or come under the protection of your column to Saltillo” (Gardner 1993:36). A part of Doniphan’s force began the march to that place on April 25, the remainder evacuating Chihuahua three days later. Doniphan reached Monterey on May 26, where Taylor ordered his men home via Camargo and New Orleans. They were mustered out of the service at the latter place, and most arrived back in Missouri about July 1, where they were given a hero’s welcome (Connelley 1907:467–468, 483–485, 495–496).

Doniphan and his men were hailed in the press. William Cullen Bryant compared Doniphan to the famous Greek soldier Xenophon (see the preface to *A Campaign in New Mexico* [Edwards 1847:vii–xi]). President Polk considered the Battle of Sacramento to be “one of the most decisive and brilliant achievements of the war” (Nevins 1929:226). But what did the expedition really accomplish? Richard Smith Elliott, a veteran of the Army of the West, wrote years later that “apart from its glory, there was no great result, except to show how large a scope of country could be conquered without strength enough following to hold it” (1883:246).⁴ Several decades later, however, historian Bernard DeVoto gave the expedition great significance, claiming that “Doniphan’s approach had prevented reinforcement of the Mexican Army that lost Buena Vista by the narrowest of margins, and his victory had made certain that the revolt at Taos would have no successor. The Missourians had saved Taylor from defeat” (1940:409).⁵

DeVoto, like many others, was overly taken with his subject, however, and his assertion that Doniphan's expedition "saved Taylor from defeat" is almost ridiculous. It is impossible to know how many men of Heredia's army would have been available to serve with Santa Anna. Probably not very many. More than 1,000 were "rancheros, badly armed with lassos, lances, and machetos, or corn knives" (Connelley 1907:434). Three hundred "were said to be criminals, turned loose from the Chihuahua prisons" (Connelley 1907:410). Of the mounted troops, historian Justin Smith states that many were presidials, whose purpose was to combat the Indian threat on the frontier. Would these be pulled away from an area that was then seeing increasing depredations? (Smith 1919[1]:306 and 157, respectively) But even if Heredia's force could have served with Santa Anna, numerical superiority alone does not guarantee a victory (witness the Battle of Sacramento). Santa Anna's troops already vastly outnumbered the Americans at Buena Vista, yet he still failed to defeat Old Rough and Ready. DeVoto's conjecture fails to consider the host of circumstances peculiar to a battle that can determine its outcome.

The claim that Doniphan's "victory had made certain that the revolt at Taos would have no successor" is equally questionable. It certainly did not stop some New Mexicans from continuing to plot after the Taos uprising, nor did it prevent attacks on American troops by combined forces of New Mexicans and Indians in eastern New Mexico in the spring and summer of 1847 (Twitchell 1912[2]:245-246; McNitt 1968:185-186). Yet Doniphan's expedition did accomplish, at least partially, one objective of the war. Secretary of War William Marcy made it clear in his instructions to Stephen Watts Kearny that it was "desirable that the usual trade between the citizens of the United States and the Mexican provinces should be continued as far as practicable" (Cutts 1965:247). Doniphan had safely delivered to Chihuahua more than 300 traders' wagons with goods estimated at \$1 million. Of course, Doniphan later gained the animosity of the American merchants by his unwillingness to remain in the city to protect their interests, but did not most of these same merchants eagerly avail themselves of his march the December previous? In any event, it would appear that the term "mere wagon-guard" was not far off the mark.

Six months after the victory at Sacramento, another Missourian had his eye on Chihuahua. Sterling Price, commander of U.S. forces at Santa Fe while Doniphan was making his celebrated march, wrote the war department in August and September 1847 requesting permission to conduct a campaign into "the lower provinces of New Mexico." Adjutant General Roger Jones wanted more information before granting such an order, and when Price wrote back on October 31 that he intended to take Chihuahua, Durango, and other provinces to the south, Jones ordered him not to launch the expedition just then. He added, however, should Price "learn that a force is organized at Chihuahua with the design of marching on New Mexico, although it is not advisable that you should proceed there for the purpose of attacking it, you should make reasonable demonstrations and use your own discretion as to when it should be encountered." However, these instructions, dated November 20, would not reach New Mexico until the following February, a delay that would have profound repercussions.⁶

Price was temporarily in Missouri when he sent his plans to Jones for approval. He had left Santa Fe for home with elements of his Second Missouri in mid-August 1847, their term of enlistment having expired. A few days before reaching "the States," Price had received a commission as a

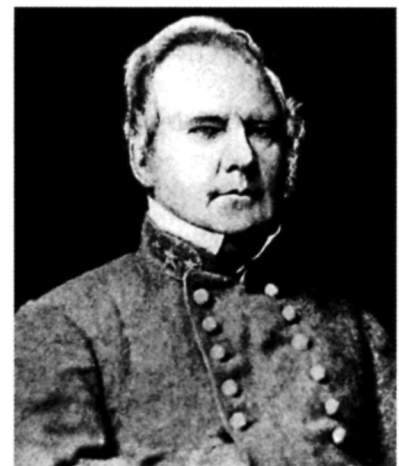


Fig. 19.7
Sterling Price in the uniform
of a Confederate major general.
From *The Photographic History*
of the Civil War, edited by
Francis Miller, 1911.

brigadier general. The new general set out again on the trail for New Mexico on November 3 and reached Santa Fe on December 9. Americans there were anxious for a military expedition against Chihuahua. Reports had been coming in since October of the mistreatment of Americans then in Chihuahua, including the imprisonment of some. Intelligence had also been received that Governor Angel Trías was making preparations to defy another American invasion. Thus Price wrote Adjutant General Jones on January 21, 1848, of his decision to occupy Chihuahua, unless the orders he was awaiting instructed him otherwise (Bieber 1936:60–62; Barry 1972:717, 724).

On February 4 Price received information that prompted him to set his campaign in motion despite the absence of a communication from Washington. A Mexican letter had been intercepted at Carrizal revealing that a large force under General José Urrea was marching on El Paso (Bieber 1936:63, 353 n. 212). Price consequently ordered the following troops to concentrate at that place: three companies of the First Regiment U.S. Dragoons, one of which was serving as light artillery; six companies of the Third Regiment Missouri Mounted Volunteers; two companies of the Missouri battalion of infantry volunteers; and the Santa Fe Battalion, a volunteer unit made up of three mounted companies and one of light artillery. Price left Santa Fe for the south on February 8, arriving at El Paso on the twenty-third.⁷

Here the general learned that the report on Urrea was false. He also is said to have finally received the November 20 orders from Jones (Shalhope 1971:71). Most important, however, was an interview Price had with James L. Collins, recently escaped from a Chihuahua prison, where he had been held under the suspicion of being an American spy. Collins related to Price “all information of Gov. Trias’ position and means of resistance” and the general, perhaps sensing an easy victory, “at once determined to march down and attack him.”⁸ Ignoring Jones’s orders, then, Price decided to make a rapid advance on Chihuahua with his “best mounted troops, for the purpose of striking a blow before the enemy could conceive my design.” He immediately sent three companies of the Santa Fe Battalion to Carrizal, ninety miles south, to cut off all communications and to gather intelligence. Price followed on March 1 with approximately 400 men and two 12-pound mountain howitzers.⁹

On March 7, Price’s force was nearing Sacramento when he was met by a Mexican delegation carrying a flag of truce. They conveyed a message from Trías, who protested the American advance on the grounds that a treaty had been signed between the United States and Mexico ending the war. Price did not believe it. The delegation then asked that the American commander send two of his officers to “arrange the preliminaries of a capitulation.” Price complied, but he was also determined to be in Chihuahua that night. While on his march just an hour later, Price was met by some Americans from Chihuahua who informed him that Trías and his army had fled the city the morning previous.¹⁰ The American troops thus marched into Chihuahua about 11:00 P.M. without a fight. “As we marched through the silent and deserted streets,” wrote Philip Gooch Ferguson in his diary, “between long rows of stately buildings, the sound of the bugle gave rise to thrilling emotions and feelings impossible to describe” (Bieber 1936:355).

The day before Price arrived in Chihuahua, he had dispatched two companies of dragoons to circle around the city to try to cut off any attempt by Trías to escape towards Durango. This detachment had become horribly lost but eventually joined up again with Price’s column at Chihuahua early on the morning of March 8. They had been unable to intercept Trías but had learned that he was headed for the town of Santa Cruz de Rosales, sixty miles away. Price put together a force of about 250 men, most of them on new mounts because the grueling pace had worn out their former ones, and at 8:00 A.M. set out again after his quarry. The howitzers were left behind in Chihuahua for the time being. Price continued his pursuit until sunrise the next day, when he found Trías and his army holed up in Santa Cruz. Although they had just completed an amazing forced march, Price now

began making preparations to storm the town.¹¹

At 7 or 8 o'clock that morning of the ninth, a demand for the unconditional surrender of the Mexican forces was sent to Trías. The Mexican commander requested a personal interview with Price, at which he refused to surrender and again informed the American general of the treaty. Other options were discussed to end the standoff but none could be agreed upon. Trías finally suggested that Price wait a few days so that a courier he had dispatched to Durango could return with confirmation of the treaty. Price acceded to this; he had seen how well the town was defended when he had gone to speak to the Mexican commander, and the extra time would allow him to bring up his howitzers from Chihuahua as well as additional artillery and troops that had followed his march from El Paso. In the meantime, Price laid siege to the town while Trías took advantage of the respite to further strengthen his defenses.¹²

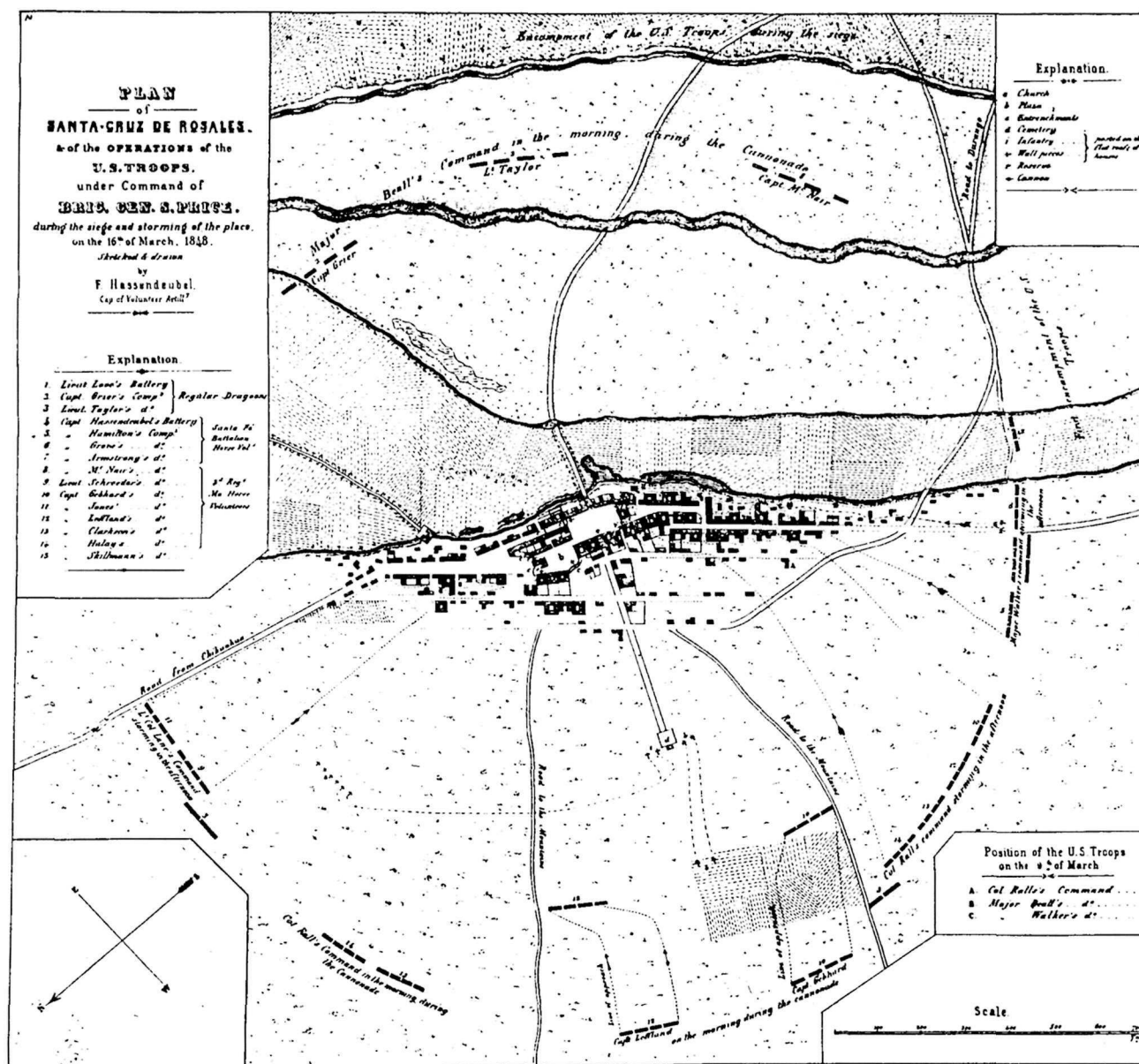


Fig. 19.8

Plan of the Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales, March 16, 1848.

From House of Representatives Executive Document No. 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, serial 537.

The reinforcements arrived on the morning of March 16. No confirmation of the treaty had arrived, and Price set about deploying his forces for the coming battle. Price now had 665 men at his disposal. Within Santa Cruz de Rosales waited 804 determined Mexican soldiers. Before beginning his attack, Price again demanded Trías's unconditional surrender, which was again refused, and about 10:30 A.M. the American artillery opened up on the town.¹³ Thus began a fierce artillery duel, "making the mud bricks fly about pretty lively," as one observer described it (Gardner 1993:135). The firing of the Americans abruptly ceased sometime later when a report reached them that a body of 900 lancers was approaching to attack their rear. Price withdrew his forces to combat this new threat, but it turned out to be only a handful of cavalry, which was easily dispersed. During this lull in the fight, merchant Edwards James Glasgow, who had ridden all night from Chihuahua to witness the battle, was taking a nap when he was "awakened by a man calling out, 'Lord God doctor what are you doing' and turning over I perceived the surgeon sawing away at a man's leg, and a short distance off some assistants dressing the stump of another's which had just been cut off. I didn't feel sleepy again for some time."¹⁴

The American bombardment was having little effect on the resolve of the Mexicans, so three storming parties, all dismounted, were sent forward at 3:30 to take the town. They were supported by well-placed artillery fire. Colonel John Ralls wrote in his report on the action that "Every house and wall, from the point of our entrance into the town to the steeple of the church, was filled with infantry, protected by barricades and parapets, and, in fact, the outlines of the walls and houses were bristled with musketry, which continued to the last to pour in the direction of our party." The Mexican soldiers also were armed with hand grenades, although the fuses on these were too long, giving the Americans plenty of time to kick them aside or into nearby structures. One of the American storming parties took with it a 12-pound howitzer, and as they hacked through the adobe walls, howitzer shells were thrown into the breaches by hand with deadly results.

Finally, near dusk, two of the parties had dug and fought their way to the plaza's edge and were preparing for a final assault when the Mexicans called out from the church and a white flag appeared. The American officers at first had trouble holding their men back, but the fight was over, and Price had his unconditional surrender.¹⁵ "The next morning," wrote Philip Gooch Ferguson, "the sight that met the eye was shocking to behold. Piles of dead Mexicans were seen in various quarters, many of them most horribly mangled" (Bieber 1936:358). Price estimated that the Mexican loss was 238 killed. Among his own troops, he reported four killed and nineteen wounded. The Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales was the last engagement of the Mexican War. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo had been signed on February 2, more than a month before the battle.¹⁶

When the news of Price's campaign and victory reached Washington, the War Department was surprised, to say the least. In a letter of May 22, Secretary of War Marcy conveyed to Price the president's "high appreciation of the gallant services of yourself and the troops under your command." But Marcy also let the general know that "It was not expected that the force under your command would be employed for any other purpose than to hold New Mexico, to secure the people of it from Indian depredations and incursions, and to prepare them for a cheerful acquiescence in the transfer of the sovereignty of that province to the United States."¹⁷ Nevertheless, Chihuahua remained an occupied city until July of 1848, when Price's army started back for home. According to Philip Gooch Ferguson, some of the soldiers had "formed connections with the dark-eyed señoritas, who became passionately attached to them. When the army left, Chihuahua was literally bathed in tears; and even now [July 15?], forty miles off, there are at least one hundred and fifty women in the wagons and on foot (some dressed in men's clothes), following their lovers." These women were ordered back to Chihuahua (Bieber 1936:361).¹⁸

On one level, Price's expedition had been a success, but it is virtually impossible to justify, especially considering that New Mexico had never really been threatened. Historian Justin Smith surmised that "commercial interests were behind this campaign" (1919[2]:419). Indeed, Price wrote Washington on February 6, two days before marching out of Santa Fe, that "Chihuahua taken and held is regarded by the American citizens here, of the utmost importance, and a measure effecting their interests to a great extent" (as quoted in Bieber 1936:63). Obviously, an American occupation of Chihuahua meant a reopening of trade to that point. Yet it is true, however, that the American merchants who had stayed behind in Chihuahua after Doniphan's evacuation did suffer abuses. "[W]e have occasionally been in a little danger from our good friends the Mexicans," wrote trader Edwards James Glasgow to his family, "and we were over joyed when Gen^l Price made his appearance in our city" (Gardner 1993:135). But did the welfare of a few merchants who had chosen to remain in Chihuahua justify a major campaign?

Price's biographer, Robert E. Shalhope, came to the conclusion that it was not commercial interests that compelled the general to march into Chihuahua against orders, but the chance to gain further military glory. Price was "aware of the tremendous possibilities that existed for a military hero to further his own position," writes Shalhope. "His future could benefit enormously from a successful campaign such as Doniphan's" (1971:75). And such was the case. Price was lauded upon his return to Missouri; four years later he was elected the state's governor.

Why, then, has Price's expedition slipped into obscurity while Doniphan's is still remembered? Doniphan, of course, had taken Chihuahua first, and the public has always had a fascination for "firsts." Probably of more importance, however, are the several books written by veterans of Doniphan's command that were published while the public was still intrigued by its exploits. These, of course, have influenced historians and writers to this day. No books were generated by members of Price's expedition. Also, the fact that the Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales occurred when the war was technically at an end has had much to do with relegating it to footnote status. Ironically, though, the more famous Chihuahua campaign of Alexander Doniphan was probably just as pointless as Price's, for when all is said and done, it too had little, if any, real bearing on the outcome of the war. ♣



Fig. 19.9
Monument to Col. Alexander W. Doniphan,
courthouse yard, Richmond, Missouri,
erected in 1918. Courtesy author.

NOTES

1. Doniphan, in his official report, gave the number killed as 43.
2. Connelley 1907:104, 410–414, 423–438 (These last pages cited contain the official reports of Doniphan, Lt. Col. Mitchell, Major W. Gilpin, and Major M. L. Clark); Edwards 1847:114–115; Duncan 1991:25–26; Bieber 1936:263–266; and “Sketch of the Battle of Sacramento,” in Senate Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 1st session, 1847 (Serial 503). Lieutenant Charles F. Wooster of the Fourth U. S. Artillery, who served as an advisor to Doniphan during the Battle of Sacramento, claimed in a letter written to Adjutant General Roger Jones that “the movements generally during the engagement were made at my suggestion.” See Gibson 1935:346, n. 452.
3. Wool had received orders to abandon his Chihuahua expedition on November 14 and was subsequently directed to join Zachary Taylor’s army at Saltillo.
4. See also Elliott’s criticism of Doniphan’s decision to march on Chihuahua in the *St. Louis Daily Reveille*, April 29, 1847.
5. DeVoto elaborated on this in *The Year of Decision, 1846* (1943:413–414).
6. Quotes from the correspondence between Price and Jones are as reprinted in Ralph P. Bieber’s introduction (1936:61–62).
7. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, 1848 (Serial 537), p. 113. This document contains the official reports by Price and his officers on the Chihuahua campaign and the Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales.
8. Account of James L. Collins in *St. Louis Missouri Republican*, May 12, 1848.
9. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, 113; *St. Louis Missouri Republican*, May 12 and 15, 1848.
10. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, p. 114.
11. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, pp. 114 and 120–121; *St. Louis Missouri Republican*, May 12, 1848; Bieber 1936:355.
12. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, pp. 114–115; *St. Louis Missouri Republican*, May 12 and 15, 1848.
13. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, pp. 77 and 116; *St. Louis Missouri Republican*, May 12 and 15, 1848.
14. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, p. 117; *St. Louis Missouri Republican*, May 12, 1848; Gardner 1993:137.
15. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, pp. 117–118, 125, 127–129, 133–134.
16. House Executive Document 1, 30th Congress, 2nd session, p. 118; Gardner 1993:161, n. 135.
17. House Executive Document 17, 31st Congress, 1st session, 1850 (Serial 537), p. 256.
18. Doniphan had to cope with this same problem. See Connelley 1907:467.

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Cura de la Frontera, Ramón Ortiz

Mary D. Taylor



HE WAS OF SPANISH BIRTH, this priest; his family coat-of-arms bore the banners of Aragon, Navarra, and Castile. His forefathers were soldiers, officers of the Spanish Crown in Spain as well as in the New World (Chávez 1973). He was to become a Mexican patriot, and as such, he put his very life on the line at least three times for his principles and the people he served at Paso del Norte for almost sixty years. His friends were the poor, the disenfranchised, the humble; his friends were also officers in the Mexican army and officials in the Mexican republic. He became the most beloved, the most tragic, and the most hated and feared, man on the long and shaky boundary between Mexico and the United States.

Legends have been handed down about him, the Cura del Paso, tales told and retold until the very fiber of them captures the imagination of succeeding generations of Paseños who weave into it their own interpretations. The actual, documented details of his life are to be found, for the most part, in the Archives of the Ayuntamiento de Juárez, in the Archives of the Mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in that same city, in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Chihuahua, and in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Durango.

At first, he longed to be a soldier like his sister's husband, don Antonio Vizcarra. Vizcarra, governor of New Mexico in 1829, was to the young Ramón a hero, and the first years of his life he spent being reared with Ana María's daughter María Josefa.¹ They were *hermanos de leche*, because of his mother's illness after he was born. Ramón's mother was Teresa Mier, the daughter of the great soldier and cartographer, don Bernardo Mier y Pacheco. Doña Teresa had had many children in addition to José Ramón; ten of them lived past infancy. When he was a child,² her health declined; she became vague, and took to her bed. It is said that she made Ana María promise to bring him up as priest and not as a soldier, perhaps looking back at her own life as the wife of an officer who was often away on dangerous campaigns against the Indians (Puckett 1950).

By the time José Ramón Ortiz was born in 1814, New Mexico, that far-flung and badly defined province of the Kingdom of New Spain, had scarcely felt the impact of Mexico's war for independence from Spain. Tremors of the bloody struggle, as Ferdinand VII of Spain slowly relinquished his hold on the New World, were felt in Santa Fe; tenure for a series of governors of the province was



Fig. 20.1
Artist's conception of Ramón Ortiz,
cura de la frontera. Illustration
Ken Barrick, professor emeritus,
NMSU, Las Cruces.

uncertain. After 1821 and the realization of independence, news from Mexico City traveled to Santa Fe even more slowly than it had before, and terms of governors changed while communications and documents made their way from one city to the other. Continuity of the government of the Diocese of Durango was much more dependable and by far more fulfilling to the people of New Mexico than its civil administrations.

When the ecclesiastic don Juan Rafael Rascón came to Santa Fe in 1829, as visitador for the Diocese of Durango, he immediately set up a school in his home for boys who might eventually become priests. New Mexico needed priests, and the seminary at Durango was fifteen hundred miles away. In those early years New Mexico was a *vicaría foranea*, a vicariate on the edge of nowhere. There were still a few Franciscans in the missions, but as they were withdrawn, secular priests replaced them. There were never enough to serve in this vast, as yet ill-charted land to the north.

Young Ramón studied in Rascón's home from 1829 until 1832. On early winter mornings, he walked from his home in the Barrio de Terreon, past the adobe Church of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, and east up the bank of the Río de Santa Fe. Fragrance of piñon wood smoke from many hearths hung on the morning air; ice fringed the banks and the water in the river. Here in the early

years of his young manhood, he walked to the large house where his teacher for Latin grammar and Castilian Spanish was Guadalupe Miranda. Ramón was a good student, and walking through the ancient city of Santa Fe in the footsteps of his forefathers, he wondered about the life he was to lead; whether soldier or priest—this was his concern.

When the time finally came for the departure of Juan Rafael Rascón for Durango in 1832, the family and Ramón himself had to decide if the priesthood was to be his life. It was a hard choice for him to make. On the one hand, he had watched his idol, don Antonio Vizcarra, as governor of New Mexico, a magnificent horseman and soldier resplendent in Spanish officer's uniform. Don Antonio had been good to him, and he encouraged him in his military ambitions. On the other hand, Vicario Rascón had been kind to him also, favoring him because of his application to his studies and because his character and resolution seemed right for the priesthood. Even though a military persuasion lingered in the back of his mind, little by little he was drawn to the idea of becoming a priest and returning to serve in New Mexico. Besides, he had promised his mother he would.

Probably in the early spring of 1833, the caravan of don Juan Rafael Rascón began the long journey from Santa Fe to Durango. The red earth slope of La Bajada, the torturous twist of trail which leads from the heights of Santa Fe to the plain below, was still slick from melted snow. There was ice in the shadowy crevasses of surrounding cliffs. The caravan, with baggage wagons, closed carriages, riders, passed the Sandia Mountains and Albuquerque; slowly it made its way past a Socorro recently repopulated after the devastation of the Pueblo Revolt in 1680. Often camp was made on the trail. Sometimes in populated places, the vicario was housed as a guest at a rancho or at a home in town. The company kept to the east side of the river on the Camino Real, in sight of the river, until at Fray Cristóbal it crossed the desolate Jornada del Muerto. In the caravan, sometimes on horseback, sometimes riding in a carriage with Juan Rafael Rascón the eighteen-year-old Ramón Ortiz was resolutely heading for the seminary at Durango where he had pledged himself to the priesthood of the Catholic Church. Also along with a substantial detail of troops as escort for the prelate was Antonio Vizcarra. Reluctantly, he had watched the young Ortiz bid goodbye to his family and set out for his vocation. He wished it had been otherwise.

At Paso del Norte, they rested for some days, taking on supplies and finding remounts for the riders. Then over the *arenales*, or sand dunes, on toward Chihuahua. Here they rested again and set out for the long trip through the Bolsón de Mapimi to Durango. In northern Mexico 1832 and 1833 were the years of a cholera epidemic in which many died. When the travelers reached the Mineral de Cuencamé, the place of origin of the Vizcarra family, they found the town in the grip of that epidemic. The towns here were far apart, ranchos and haciendas intervening. And each one devastated by cholera. It was October, but in that semi-tropical area, the days and nights were still warm. On October 2, 1833, in the arms of José Ramón, don Antonio Vizcarra died of cholera; he was buried on October 3 in the campo santo. Others who died, some from the families of Ortiz and Vizcarra, were buried in a common pit by the church and covered with lime.³ There was no time to dig separate graves, so many were the dead. Here Ramón Ortiz learned to administer peyote and mariola to alleviate the extreme suffering of those who contracted cholera (Bandelier 1882–1892).

His entry into the seminary at Durango was a sad one. His beloved Vizcarra was dead, and his new life was among strangers except for Juan Rafael Rascón.

The failure of several governments in Mexico after the reign of Emperor Agustín Iturbide finally resulted in the resurgence of a well-known figure in Mexico, Antonio López de Santa Anna. Brought to power in 1832, he undertook the presidency of Mexico, and by 1833 was attempting to impose his will on the diocesan government of Durango. The first of his edicts was a decree to stop or curtail the collection of *diezmos* for the church, the system of tithing which gave the church life, yet a system

which was often abused. The second was aimed at church personnel—Santa Anna wanted to have the final word in the appointment of church officials and on some of the policies. Bishop José Antonio Zubiría y Escalante, having made his first *visita* to New Mexico in 1833, made the journey back to Durango in a poor state of health. Even before his arrival there, he heard through messengers of the high-handed methods of the new president. Upon arrival, he found himself placed in the position of either yielding to the presidential decrees or having the Ley de Destierro, the Law of Exile, enforced upon him. He refused to obey and secretly set out in the night for his hacienda at Santa Catalina de Cacaria. From there, he rode into the recesses of the Sierra Madre and sought refuge in a cave—he stayed for almost a year, undiscovered and out of presidential reach:

By mail today I received a new decree from the Sovereign Congreso General concerning the Law of the seventeenth of December and assignments of curacies. The priests will carry on as long as possible and in case, indeed, I am a victim of the Ley de Destierro, take this to the Señor Provisor so that he can show it to all the curas . . . Pray for me.⁴

Juan Rafael Rascón in that year of 1834 went to Chihuahua as cura coadjuta and vicario en capite of that curacy, and Ramón Ortiz, withdrawing from the seminary, went with him. In reality, this was a flight from Durango, as all those prelates close to the bishop were suspected of disobedience to the administration of Santa Anna. When Ortiz asked for readmission in 1835, he gave as reason for his absence the destitute condition of his parents. In reality, he had studied moral theology with Rascón in Chihuahua and served with him in the great cathedral in that city.

On Holy Saturday, 1837, Ramón Ortiz, almost twenty-four years old, was ordained a priest in the stone cathedral of Durango. Outside in the *plaza de armas*, spring had touched the trees; inside the cathedral the sacristan had sprinkled flower-scented water on the tiled and marbled floors. The stone steps to the second floor balcony were scrubbed; the bell towers were swept clean and the polished bells shone in the morning light. Outside those stone walls, the history of Mexico revolved around the machinations of Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. But in the ancient cathedral rays of light shone down through the dome on the gold and white altar and the young men who were to take their final vows. It was here in this holy place that the confrontation between the ideologies of the president of Mexico and those of a young and newly ordained priest began.

During the last part of 1837 and the first part of 1838, fifteen hundred miles to the north in Paso del Norte, old Father Maximo de Jesús Yrigoyen grew weaker in his illness and died. On May 17, 1838, Ramón Ortiz began to sign the parish books as cura interino.⁵ He was young and vigorous, and a river of energy began to flow through the curacy at the pass. Now things were different. The Indians, Manso and Piro, passed over and sometimes taken advantage of by Father Yrigoyen, could feel a new current in the old church of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. The church interior was cleaned, whitewashed, and brightened. Vigas were scrubbed; the roof was repaired. The Indians and mestizos, the lower classes at that mission, had been sluggish in their work in the past. For the most part, they had never given assistance to the priest in charge and had stayed in the background while the vecinos, the Spanish, and the upper class had taken spiritual benefits from the church and had supplied money for vestments, santos, and sacred vessels. Father Yrigoyen had accepted this and had even begun to profit a little from it. Now, in the parish books, Father Ramón Ortiz marked the *aranceles* of the Indians, their fees, with a “0”, not charging them anything at all if they had nothing to give. Instead, he offered them a certain dignity and a responsibility associated with Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Those who met his intense gaze were captured by it. He did not favor them, he did not choose them above the others. He simply required them to become real parishioners, distributing duties and small

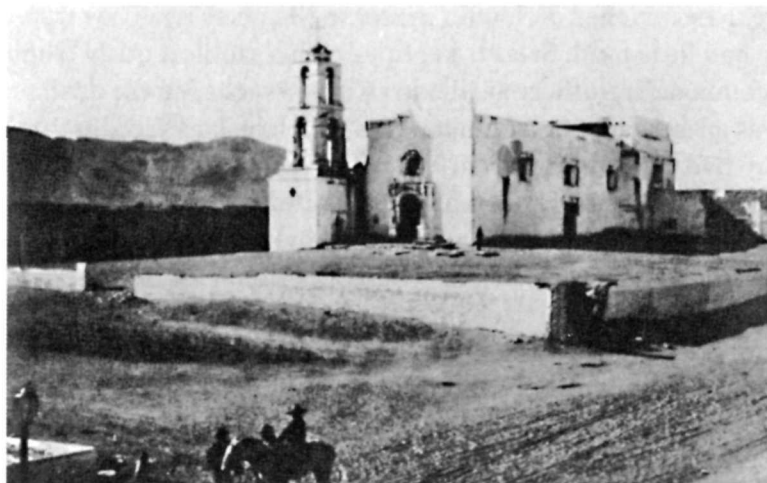


Fig. 20.2

El Paso (Juarez), Mexico.
The church exterior from the east,
1880. Photo Ben Wittick. Courtesy
Laboratory of Anthropology,
MNM# 15670.

honors. He criticized the way the roof was mended if it was repaired badly, he berated their lack of energy in carrying and laying adobes in repairing the church. But they did not resent him. He required them to participate in the sacraments of confession and communion. He kept track of husbands and wives, the poor, the sick, and sought out ways to lend a hand in all their tasks. He was a strong young man and he made a good example. The lower classes as well as the vecinos began to love him as the good shepherd he was.

By the time the Texan war of independence from Mexico had resulted in Santa Anna's defeat on the plains of San Jacinto in 1836, and by the time Texas had failed in her pretensions on the territory of New Mexico in 1841 and 1842, the curacy of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was one the Bishop of Durango José Antonio Zubiría could be proud of. He often directed letters to the young curate there as "*Mi muy amado hijo*." There were not many to whom he was so affectionate in greeting. One such letter concerned a chaplaincy to accompany the governor of Chihuahua on a campaign against the Indians. Such was the political climate and such were the ambitions of a few of the priests at that time that the bishop chose Ramón Ortiz to go "because there is no other in whom I have this confidence."⁶

In 1841, a *concurso* was scheduled at Durango so that priests could be examined in theology and morals and other matters in order to advance in responsibility and title. At the same time, and on the same journey, the young Ortiz was charged by the bishop to travel through Bavispe, Janos, Casas Grandes, and Galeana to correct some badly performed and invalid sacraments in those places.⁷ He did well in the examinations for the concurso; his grades were among the highest. He placed in three *quinternas*, that is, he became a candidate for the higher title in three different curacies.⁸ His hope was to become cura propio for Paso del Norte at his mission at Guadalupe. On August 11, 1841, a letter in his firm, youthful hand reveals that he had been confirmed as cura propio, juez ecclesiastico of Paso del Norte. Soon the tragedy of his life was to begin, a life dedicated to the people along the river, and he began to use the principles and ideologies instilled in him by his prelate teachers at the seminary at Durango. It is said that the revolutionary spirit is always spawned in the north of Mexico, and in Durango the instructors of these young priests laid the foundation for the waging of many battles along the Río Grande in the years to come. The life of José Ramón Ortiz was such a contest.

Perhaps the first of his encounters with injustice, and his quick repudiation of it, came in the year 1841 when a line of bedraggled and weary remnants of the Texan invasion of New Mexico straggled into Paso del Norte under the command of the Mexican officer Damacio Salazar (Kendall 1935). The Texans had been soundly defeated by Governor Manuel Armijo of New Mexico, and the survivors

were to be marched on foot in winter to Mexico City. They were ragged, many of them barefoot, and they had little food. Salazar kept tied to his saddle a grisly trophy, an accounting to be presented to his commanding officer at Mexico City—a record of the dead prisoners who had begun the journey. It was a leather thong of human ears which he had sliced from those who fell so he could prove that many had begun the march. When the residents of Paso del Norte and the members of the Ortiz household witnessed this sad line of half-dead men entering the Villa del Paso, they watched with hushed astonishment as Salazar rode slowly at the head of the column. Soon they were holding out food to the prisoners, leather bags of *aguardiente*, a little coffee. Damacio Salazar struck at the offerings with his quirt, spilling the liquid on the road. When the march reached the home of the young priest, Ortiz pushed his way through the throng of onlookers, and in a moment's time took charge of the situation. Salazar did not countermand the order when the priest directed the men into his own home. Ortiz sent women running for clean linen, food, bedclothes. Water was heated, the weakened men were bathed, fed, and clothed in clean linen. They were guests in his home. And then Ramón Ortiz made his way on horseback to the home of the comandante of the presidio, don José María García Conde. Salazar was reprimanded and immediately deprived of his command, and later the Texans were taken to Mexico City where they were imprisoned. Ramón Ortiz had electrified the Villa of Paso del Norte, showing that, through courage, humanity could prevail even at the risk of challenging civil and military power.

Other occasions of defying those who would govern his people badly presented themselves. The United States had, by 1846, developed a mentality of "Manifest Destiny." The superior force of its military and the conception of a God-given right to extend its limits to the Pacific Ocean furnished the U.S. government with the energy and the egoism to assemble an army at Independence, Missouri, in June and to begin the march which was to lead to the conquest of New Mexico. To Mexico, which was still drilling its army in the traditional European manner, the prospect of this invasion seemed remote but frightening. The Americans fought in a manner scarcely heard of in Mexico. Some of the Army of the West was made up of regulars, drilled in horsemanship and marksmanship, and they were good at their work. But the bulk of the army was a distressing sight. They were frontiersmen, dressed in hickory shirts (made of a coarse, tough cloth woven with a strong material) and leather, and they carried rifles. They were undisciplined and rowdy, and could scarcely keep a good drill line. But in a fight they were ferocious and deadly—theirs was an independence learned on frontiers in the eastern part of the United States, where the fathers and grandfathers of these soldiers had won a war of independence from England in 1776. In August 1846, the Army of the West rode into Santa Fe and met little resistance. General Manuel Armijo, governor of New Mexico, abruptly deserted the field and fled. Some said, with good reason, that he was bought with money carried in the saddle bags of the merchant James Magoffin whose wagon train accompanied the army.⁹

Ramón Ortiz wrote to Bishop Zubiría on August 26, 1846:

By a special mail yesterday I wrote to Sr. Rascón asking him to tell you what has happened in New Mexico. Today at ten o'clock another mail has arrived in which the Señor Comandante sent the news . . . the 16th of the present month the clergy, the civil and judicial authorities and all the rest, gave a solemn oath of obedience, adhering to the new government. On the 17th various parties of from 300 to 400 men left Santa Fe—parties of American forces going to different places in that department. It is not known the object but it is presumed that it is to gather foodstuffs. A party of 500 dragoons comes to establish itself in the last settlement of the Department in order to impede the departure of many families who are preparing to abandon the invaded country.

The invaders are reported by everyone to respect religion, property, and the lives of those of New Mexico.

The American forces are said to number some 2500 and others report even 6000. They bring a million *pesos* worth of effects and they will occupy Chihuahua very shortly and, consequently El Paso; nevertheless, we believe in Divine Providence, in the prayers of our fathers and brothers, and the enthusiasm of the Pueblos, and these will be taken only by passing over our dead bodies. Pray then, my beloved Father, to God for us and command this unworthy servant who loves you. Your obedient son who awaits your pastoral blessing. . . .

At the bottom of the letter:

The governor of New Mexico is don Santiago [James] Magoffin, he whom you will see in Chihuahua and is known there with the distinction of consul.¹⁰

The cura Ramón Ortiz had a deep understanding of the situation in New Mexico, the political maneuverings of the United States, and a prescience of how things were to be.

The Army of the West separated into two branches: one column going to California with General Stephen Watts Kearny and the other aiming itself at Chihuahua and the rest of Mexico under a young red-headed colonel, Alexander Doniphan. Doniphan headed down the Camino Real, or the Chihuahua–Santa Fe Trail as it was sometimes called. Downriver across the Jornada del Muerto they marched, through Doña Ana, New Mexico, where the oath of allegiance was taken by assembled Mexicans.¹¹ The long column moved downriver, covered wagons swaying over bumps and ruts in the trail, camping at established camping places, *parajes*. Baggage wagons were to the rear of the column; the artillery was still farther behind. On December 25, 1846, Doniphan made camp at Bracito, remembered in Mexico as Temascalitos. A short but fierce battle ensued in which the American frontiersmen, schooled in the battle techniques of survival against many foes, defeated the Mexican army which marched its men in formation into the deadly American fire. Not only were there Veracruz dragoons in that Mexican line but scores of farmers from Paso del Norte, armed with bows and arrows, and with clubs. Only a few had muskets. After a short and fierce battle, and after facing the terrible and accurate fire of the Americans, the Mexican army fled to El Paso and beyond.

For weeks and months prior to the Battle of Temascalitos, patriotic Mexicans, Ramón Ortiz among them, had been sending reports to Chihuahua concerning the movements of the Army of the West, *los norteamericanos extranjeros*. Now, at Paso del Norte, which fell to the Americans without firing a shot, a detachment from Doniphan's army called at the home of Ramón Ortiz and arrested him (Connelley 1907).¹²

As a prisoner on the way to the conquest of Chihuahua, riding in his own carriage, the young Mexican priest found that he and Colonel Doniphan had much in common. Both had a knowledge of the law, both were honorable men, both had ideals. But here Ortiz made a very bad error in judgment: he told Doniphan within earshot of a soldier who wrote it in his journal that Mexico would rather lose her national existence and become part of the United States than submit to a foreign prince. This remark was to be held against him and used out of context by future political enemies.

Ramón Ortiz, journeying over the sand dunes of northern Chihuahua in February 1847, rode on to the field of Sacramento, the ground where Mexico was to lose yet another battle. Citizens of Chihuahua had outfitted an army of young men in brilliant uniforms, had given up their best horses, had given of private wealth to provide them with arms and ammunition. The American advance was to be stopped short here, on earth not too far from the city of Chihuahua. When the Mexican lines could be seen in the distance, Ortiz was on horseback, and as he rose in his stirrups for a better view,

he turned and begged Colonel Doniphan to turn back. The American army was outnumbered and would be smashed, he said; there would be many casualties. The Mexican artillery was already trained upon the Americans. The carnage would be a dreadful sight. But Doniphan gave orders for formation, deployed his own lines, and brought up the American artillery. Because of good scouting and daring charges, because of the American initiative in battle—some units did not wait for orders—the Mexican lines were broken, the line of cannon breached, the heights taken.¹³

When night came, Ramón Ortiz remained on the bloody field hearing confessions and giving absolution to the wounded and the dying. He himself washed wounds and dressed them; his fingers brushed and closed the eyes of the dead. When Doniphan approached him and asked how he thought the Americans had fought, he said, “Ah sir, they would have defeated you if you had fought like men, but you fought like devils.” Ortiz was beginning to see something of the character and force of the Americans.

In December 1847, Ramón Ortiz was elected to the general congress of the Mexican Republic and as such was permitted by his bishop to take leave of his curacy and go to Mexico City.¹⁴ The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed by both nations in 1848, and Ortiz was eloquent in his opposition to Mexico’s endorsement. He objected to the loss of territory and to the humiliation to the Mexican nation. His was the phrase in the final text of the treaty which defined the boundary as “the deepest channel” of the Rio Grande (Bartlett 1965).¹⁵ He fought for every inch of territory he could save for Mexico, and for his people in the curacy of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

On August 19, 1848, the government of Mexico issued a decree creating a commission to bring people from the newly conquered territory into what was still considered Mexican. Ramón Ortiz was the commissioner chosen for the territory of New Mexico and Chihuahua. When the thirty-three-year-old curate arrived in New Mexico, he recruited so vigorously and so eloquently that the American military governor of New Mexico, Col. John S. Washington, feared he would depopulate the territory. Using as an excuse that around Taos and Santa Fe Ortiz had incited people to riot, he quickly “placed at the priest’s disposal” a military escort to accompany him out of New Mexico (Twitchell 1917:198).¹⁶ Nevertheless, some of the residents of northern New Mexico did emigrate. Together with the commission to bring those emigrants into Mexico, Ortiz was given the task of creating colonies along the river—colonies to be settled by these repatriots. This he did, but, in addition to these *emigrados verdaderos* from New Mexico, he brought from the towns around Paso del Norte and from El Paso itself the victims of recent floods and famine, the poor, those abused by wealth and power, refugees of all kinds. They had been suffering and hungry at Paso del Norte and the towns below that villa; the American army of occupation had occupied their *ejidos* and their pastures. There the soldiers saw fields and they put their animals to graze. They took oxen to meet the army’s needs, and they foraged to feed men and animals. Ramón Ortiz, through his new commission, resolved to correct these injustices.

With all these people, new colonists, those whose eyes saw only far horizons, Ramón Ortiz peopled the colonies of La Mesilla, Los Amoles, Santo Tomas, Guadalupe, and San Ygnacio. To them he issued *terrenos* for plowing and sowing with the hope of a spring crop in the years of 1850 and 1851. They were to dig an *acequia madre*, the ditch from which minor ditches fed, from the river to the fields; this they did in all the colonies.¹⁷ Fruit trees and vineyards were set in, and hopes were high for a new life on a new frontier.

The next step in the plan of colonization for the cura of Paso del Norte, the commissioner of *emigrados*, was to assign houselots or *solares de casa* in the manner laid out in the Laws of Colonization of 1851. This was the prescribed step, but to Ramón Ortiz, the important thing was for his people to get their crops in, and so he assigned *terrenos de labor*, working lands, first. Ortiz

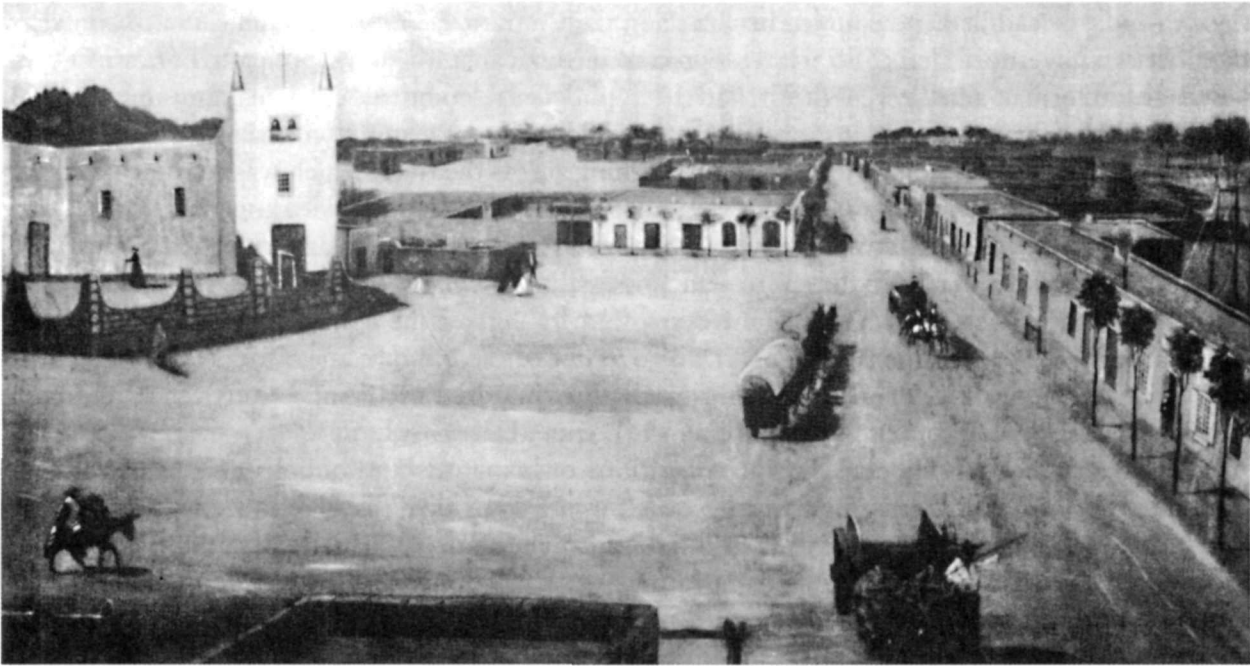


Fig. 20.3

Old Mesilla Plaza, 1885. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, neg #37917.

brought his parishioners upriver from Paso and settled them on new lands, giving them deeds and promising houselots in the near future. Meanwhile they were to live on temporary plazas, dig their ditches, and sow their fields.

Simultaneous events faced the priest from Paso del Norte in 1852 and 1853. His enthusiasm, his patriotism, his idealism, his hot-headed eloquence, his paternal care of his people along the Río Grande—all these combined into a force which clashed head-on with the pretensions of both the United States and, again, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna of Mexico. The Boundary Commission resulting from the war with Mexico and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo had established a compromise line between the two countries which pleased neither side. The U.S. Congress repudiated the line. And almost at the same time, Santa Anna, who had retired after the Treaty of Guadalupe, was invited back to head a faltering Mexican government. The Plan de Jalisco was declared at midnight at the Chihuahua garrison on December 28, 1852, bringing General Angel Trías to head the state of Chihuahua and deposing the established governor (Almada 1955).¹⁸ It was also, at a later stage, to reestablish Santa Anna as head of the federal government.

As soon as the news arrived in Santa Fe that Congress had refused to acknowledge the compromise line, the new governor, William Carr Lane, early in 1853 resolved to seize the disputed territory for the United States. On February 28, the governor left Santa Fe bound for Paso del Norte in Chihuahua, Mexico. It was his intention to deliver a proclamation to the jefe politico at Paso, ultimately to be handed to General Trías, demanding possession of the disputed territory. He requested from Colonel Miles at Fort Fillmore, seven miles from La Mesilla, "a company of horse, a piece of artillery, and a flag." Miles refused. On March 13, at Doña Ana, Governor Lane revealed his shocking proclamation, declaring that the pronouncement was his own official responsibility and without orders from Washington. The young cura of Paso del Norte received the news of the proclamation with a burst of patriotic anger. This Ramón Ortiz, the priest who had studied under teachers constantly rebelling against tyranny and infusing seminarians with that spirit of rebellion, could not let the incident pass without objecting. Swathed in *jorongo* and woolen scarf against cold

March winds, he saddled and spurred his horse on the Camino Real toward Doña Ana to confront the American governor. That official later reproached Mexican authorities: “one of your officials, in the unnatural form of a belligerent priest, had the impudence to come to this town in my absence, and breathe savage threatenings against me in case I should enter the disputed territory.”¹⁹

The patriot priest Ramón Ortiz then rode splashing across the river, which was running full from melting snow in the mountains. The wind was still blowing, and shaking with anger and cold, Ortiz rode into Mesilla where the *juez* (judge) had assembled residents on the plaza to see what should be done if, indeed, Governor Lane did try to take possession. By the time the priest arrived, and much to his displeasure, Mesilleros had become convinced by persons he considered traitors that they should accept whatever proposal the American governor offered, if he came. Ortiz rode on towards the Pass with the news; General Angel Trías with eight hundred men made ready to march upon Mesilla to prevent Lane’s attempt to take over the disputed territory.

Through a series of deliberate misinterpretations of his words and quotations out of context, Ramón Ortiz was now accused of disaffection for the Plan de Jalisco and an affinity for the annexation of the disputed territory by the United States. The truth of the matter was that Ortiz would not support the return of Santa Anna to head the Mexican government and made no secret of his allegiance to the already established government.²⁰ The bitterest fact of all was that his old teacher, Guadalupe Miranda, headed the attack on his patriotism. His long-time friend Alejo García Conde, comandante militar del estado de Chihuahua, wrote to Bishop Zubiria on March 26, 1853, that the enemies of Ramón Ortiz had accused the priest of responsibility for the recent disturbances in La Mesilla. He added that the only sin Ortiz was guilty of was the same sin of which he himself was guilty: loyalty to the government as opposed to the plan which returned Santa Anna to Mexico as president. Conde wrote: “The most idiotic charge against Ramón Ortiz is that he advocated the claims of the Americans. He has always obstructed this with danger to his life and with sacrifice of his interests and tranquility.”²¹

In April 1853, as a consequence of his outspoken opposition to Santa Anna’s return to power, Ramón Ortiz was deposed from the commission for emigration and Guadalupe Miranda became commissioner in his place. A charge of treason was leveled against the young priest: “The *Cura* . . . is most dangerous . . . because he is the defender of the country of the North American pirates.”²² In December of that year, Santa Anna had sold to the United States the disputed territory, having now, including cessions of land by the Treaty of Guadalupe, signed away two-thirds of Mexican national territory. Anyone who opposed him was charged with treason, and those who fawned over him were rewarded. Ramón Ortiz wrote to his bishop:

the one who really controls the Partido is Guadalupe Miranda, a person (and the only one) who advertises his irreligiousness and who works as hard as he can to instill into everyone his atheism . . . the circumstances of his position have made many follow his misguidance . . . I don’t have the Christian resignation and moral strength to suffer so many false charges. I beg Your Excellency to relieve me from this spiritual tumult [in this curacy] . . . my duty as a Christian and priest was to obey the established government . . . my mission is a mission of peace . . . Pray for me.²³

The cura of Paso del Norte, now forty years old, was beginning to feel the effects of his battles against tyrannical government; self-doubt assailed him. He began to wonder if he really had a vocation for the priesthood. For his efforts in behalf of his flock, he had been rewarded by charges of treason and had been placed under house arrest on November seventh. On November 12, 1854, in the *sala capitular* of the government building at Paso with the officials of the opposition and those

who had openly opposed Santa Anna's return, he resigned himself to a proclamation vowing to uphold the present federal government now under Santa Anna's direction. In the document he made a special point to congratulate particularly those signers who were believed to be disloyal, himself among them. The bells of the mission church of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe pealed and a *Te Deum* was sung.

On November 16, 1854, the American national flag was raised above La Mesilla, officially consummating the Gadsden Purchase. The Mexican troops quartered in Mesilla witnessed the ceremony; then they offered their swords to the American officers from Fort Fillmore and returned to Mexico. Everything Ramón Ortiz had worked against had come to pass; the chance for a true Mexican democracy had disappeared.

The third and most severe confrontation by Ramón Ortiz against tyranny took place when the Laws of Reform were promulgated and Benito Juárez came to power as president of the Republic of Mexico. The Zapotec Indian president who had once studied for the priesthood stripped from the church its treasure and the rights of its priests with the Laws of Reform and the Constitution of 1857. The Laws of Reform assured the common man of his right to baptism, marriage, and burial without the necessary presence of the church (Ramírez 1975:662). They also made ancient processions and traditional religious customs outside the church illegal. At the church of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, for example, *matachín* dances were prohibited and the usual procession and novena around the plaza beginning on December third to honor the Blessed Virgin were outlawed. Ringing of church bells was limited—there were rules now for *repiques* and tolls. The new laws prescribed at what hour the bells could ring and for how long and on exactly which feast days. The Cura Ramón Ortiz was again persecuted—limited in the number of candles he could use at the mission, limited in the fees he could request. His own nephew Dr. Mariano Samaniego, whom he had sent to the Sorbonne to study medicine, became jefe político of Paso del Norte and supported the laws of Benito Juárez.²⁴ On March 3, 1865, Ramón Ortiz wrote to Dr. Luis Rubio at Durango asking to be relieved of his curacy—he wanted only to retire and ready himself for death. On some mornings he could not mount his horse, so severe was the pain in his chest.²⁵ He was almost fifty, and the years of strife weighed heavily upon him. He worried constantly about breaking his vows—especially those of humility and obedience. The effort to keep silent in the face of continual persecution of his church by the new regime was almost too much for him. More and more, as his letters attest, he doubted that he should have become a priest.

When the Emperor Maximilian, supported by Napoleon Bonaparte, accepted the throne of Mexico in 1865, the Catholic church as a whole supported him. The French armies found ready sympathy and support in the Indian and mestizo population because these humble people longed for their processions and days of fiesta outlawed by the Benito Juárez regime. Ecclesiastical properties had been confiscated, even those owned privately. Luis Terrazas, while enforcing the Ley Juárez and these confiscations as governor of Chihuahua, acquired much church property, becoming in the process the wealthiest hacendado in Chihuahua (Almada 1955). Ramón Ortiz watched with sadness the authority of and respect for the church slipping away. His anger now came more slowly, tempered as it was with disappointment and disillusion. His parishioners still loved him and stood by him, except for a few who resented his unyielding position against improper authority. He was assailed by authorities of both the state and federal governments, and as his admiration for the empire grew, he determined once again to act. He left his curacy with permission in 1866 and did not return until 1873.

In the year 1866, he rode at the side of José María Zuloaga, jefe político of Cantón Galeana, exhorting residents to support Maximilian's empire; this was territory he knew well, the mountain villages in Chihuahua. The French armies occupied Ciudad Chihuahua, and Benito Juárez three times

sought refuge for his government in Paso del Norte. Then it became impossible for Ramón Ortiz to return. He was followed and spied upon in Chihuahua by Juaristas because once again he dared defy that which he considered tyranny. From Campo de Calera on March 6, 1867, he wrote to the Secretary of the Holy Miter at Durango that he had been away from his curacy at El Paso since December 20, 1866, for the reason he had given in his communication of that year. Ordered to return, he replied that it was impossible because he had been commanded to present himself at a court martial in Chihuahua without even knowing the charges, and a judgment had been made against him by witnesses who had been bribed. He was then ordered to Santo Tomás in the sierra to take charge of that curacy and was traveling there when the governor of the state, Manuel Ojinaga, and the jefe politico of that town met him on the road and accused him of inciting a revolution in favor of the empire. He was taken prisoner and kept a month in the desert—the consequence, a complete breakdown of his health, emotionally and physically. He begged again to retire from active administrations to restore his health.

Fighting between the forces of the empire and the various splintered factions of the republican forces flared again in northern Chihuahua. *Cacigajes regionales*, local Juarista chiefs of factions warring for supremacy, battled each other. These were the skirmishes the cura witnessed in the mountains—guerilla warfare, bloody, savage conflict without quarter. By 1867, Chihuahua had fallen to imperial forces and been recovered several times under various republican officers. Ramón Ortiz was bitter and tired. His ministry was centered around Santo Tomás and Temosachic in the high sierra, where most of the fighting occurred, and he despaired of the ideals of his younger years. He realized now that nothing could save Mexico from itself; there were no longer any true patriots. He even wondered about himself, although he had withdrawn from his enemies for what he thought was the good of his people. Now, looking back, he reflected that his real motive might have been reluctance to face the issues as he had done when he was younger. He retired farther from the faces he saw around him, and now as he left and went deeper into the mountains, he did not even ask permission from the bishop. He went into the mines at La Calera near the border between Sonora and Chihuahua, working far from the center of conflict.

In Paso del Norte and the towns around that villa, they remembered Ramón Ortiz with affection and longing. Few men of his stature had survived the ongoing struggle. Wherever they looked—the pulpit, the confessional, the workplaces of the city, in forums where political opinions were expressed—they saw his face. They remembered his quick temper and his passion for righteousness. They remembered the way he looked into their eyes with his own direct and penetrating gaze. Petitions began to flood the bishopric at Durango.²⁶ When would he return? They were tired of factionalism, of pettiness, of despotism. The name Ramón Ortiz came to mean to the inhabitants of Paso a return to sanity in government, the end of a search for justice, security. And still he did not return. After the fighting in the mountains ceased, he served the Alta Tarahumara until 1873 when he was almost sixty years old. A new bishop, José Vicente Salinas, finally ordered him to come to Paso del Norte. From Chihuahua on September 20, 1870, Ortiz wrote to the bishop concerning his friends at Paso:

we naturally are all fond of each other. There is nothing I desire more than to be among them. I broke with all sentiments of the heart in order to follow the advice of my confessor—I withdrew with the prior permission of my superiors. Now I return, and if Your Excellency orders me to remain there, it must be after I inform you of the reason of my separation in the first place. My conscience tells me to do this.

Ramón Ortiz, the cura propio, juez ecclesiastico of Paso del Norte, had revealed his innermost feelings to the new bishop; perhaps more than he meant to share.²⁷

The clamoring for the return of the beloved *cura* to his people became even louder. There was an insistence which could neither be ignored nor denied. Bishop Salinas listened and made investigations. Finally, in June 1873, on a visita to Chihuahua, the bishop recorded:

I greet you from this lovely city. Last Wednesday I came from Santa Rosalia to the Hacienda de Delicias . . . and I slept there Thursday. I said Mass and came to Santa Cruz de Rosales which the curve of the river and a beautiful alameda separates from Delicias. . . . Saturday at eight o'clock in the evening I arrived at this city. My entrance into the capital I cannot describe . . . an escort of cavalry and a multitude of families in lovely carriages . . . a solemn Te Deum. . . . The city was all decorated . . . the crowd was immense. . . . Father Corral assisted me at Mass and preached: the Senor Cura Ortiz who was to visit me at Delicias and who was to follow me here also was present. He has come on Saturday, . . . I received him as you would suppose, giving him an *abrazo* and drying his tears. After I heard his confession, yesterday he began to celebrate Mass . . . he doesn't want to do anything but what I order him to do. Again, and for everything, Blessed be God!

Whatever had happened to Ramón Ortiz in the Sierra de Tarahumara and in Chihuahua during the long years of his self-imposed exile, in 1873 he was at peace. The time of his rebellion was over; he would return to Paso del Norte to his old curacy.²⁸

On November 11, 1896, Ramón Ortiz, at eighty-two years of age, died at his home in Paso del Norte. His funeral mass was said in the old church of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Friends, parishioners, family crowded the church; some of the faithful even climbed the bell towers to view the catafalque as it entered the funeral procession. Businesses on both sides of the river were closed. There were one hundred seventeen carriages of families, fifty mounted men, and so many on foot they could not be counted. His body was taken for burial a mile from the church to the cemetery at the chapel of San José. There he rests among friends and relatives.

His life was a monument to endurance, a life of disquiet, of tumult. His was a passionate dedication to the triumph of good over injustice. He was never quiet when courage was required. His words were eloquent yet reckless in the defense of his principles. Desperately needing the reassurance he rarely received, his purpose seldom wavered before a crisis. If tenacity is a virtue, his life was a monument to that quality. Above all, his love of Mexico was the brightest light along the *frontera* and the Río Grande in the nineteenth century. There are historical accounts of men who died in defense of principles; there are few accounts of men who lived as this man did. Ramón Ortiz lived fifty-six years as cura propio of Paso del Norte, sometimes in excruciating and miserable state, serving God his cura, and Mexico. ♣

NOTES

Unless otherwise indicated, quoted material is from the Archives of the Archdiocese of Durango: *Papeles varios*, 1830-1875; *Cartas y officios*, 1830-1874; *Diezmos*, 1850-1860. Additional sources include the Archives of the Archdiocese of Chihuahua: *Cartas, Officios, Padrones, Planes*—1835-1875; Archives of the *Ayuntamiento de Ciudad Juárez*: Reels 15, 16, 17, 61, 62; Records in the office of County Clerk, Doña Ana County Courthouse, Las Cruces, New Mexico; Catron Papers, Coronado Room, Zimmerman Library, UNM; Michael Steck Papers, Coronado Room, UNM; Libros de Bautismos, Casamientos, Entierros, San Albino Church, Mesilla, New Mexico; Rio Grande Historical Collections, NMSU; selected documents in the State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe; interviews with members of the Ortiz and Samaniego families; interviews with Elizabeth Armendariz, Secundino Gomez, and others; U.S. Census Reports from 1850, 1860, 1870; records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives, 1790-1917; library of Manuel Russek (includes library of Guillermo Porras), Chihuahua; U.S. Congressional Record: Thirty-Second Congress, Second Session, VII, No. 41, Serial 665; Thirty-Third Congress, Second Session, VII, No. 55, Serial 752; Thirty-Third Congress, First Session, Executive Document 41.

1. The cousins are both listed as living in the house of Antonio José Ortiz, Ramón's grandfather, in the Santa Fe census of 1821, Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe (AASF).
2. The account of Ramón Ortiz's childhood is taken from several sources, including the *Liempieza de sangre* (Archives of the Archdiocese of Durango, *Ordenaciones*, 1837), an examination of the ancestry and background of a candidate for the priesthood. Some of the testimony concerning Ortiz's early years was given by don Juan Rafael Rascón, who revealed that the young Ramón carried out the duties of an acolyte, frequented communion, and lectured in spiritual matters while living with the prelate in Chihuahua in 1834-1835.
3. The Archives of the Archdiocese of Durango (AAD) contain records of the deaths at Cuencamé; other details are available in a report of a 1979 archaeological excavation of lime-covered bones found in a pit alongside the church of San Antonio de Cuencamé.
4. Archives of the Archdiocese of Chihuahua, No. 10, *Gob. & Admon. Serie: Parroquias*.
5. *Libro de bautismos, yglesia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, 1838, microfilm, UTEP (erroneously labeled "Cathedral Archives").
6. From papers in the private collection of Jesus Lozano, Ciudad Chihuahua.
7. AAD, reel 17, frame 623 (UTEP)
8. *Documentos que comprueban la relacion de servicios del Presbitero D^o Ramón Ortiz Cura Ynterino de la Villa del Pazo, para los fines de su precentacion al concurso de Curatos, Durango Año de 1841* (AAD, Documentos diversos)
9. *Revista Chihuahuense*, tomo III, capitulo V, fn. p. 17, May 15 and 31, 1911. In his unpublished manuscript on the life of Father Antonio José Martínez, Antonio Espinosa cites Twitchell's "Conquest of Santa Fe" (Historical Society of New Mexico, Misc. #2832).
10. AAD, *Varios de 1846*. This statement that Magoffin was the governor of New Mexico was probably correct, as he was the emissary of the U.S. president. The appointment as governor pro-tem might have been in Magoffin's saddlebags as well.
11. National Archives, Group 98, NMRA: 65-1229, Records of the U.S. Army commands, selected letters received, Department of New Mexico, 1848-1853, Capt. Enoch Steen to Lt. Delos B. Sackett.
12. John T. Hughes's report on "Doniphan's Expedition" (published in 1848) also appears in the *Congressional Record, Sixty-Third Congress, Second Session, Senate Document 608*. Connelley (1907) also includes an interview with Odon Guitar, who rode with Doniphan and was assigned as special guard for prisoner Ramón Ortiz.
13. *Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados-Unidos, 1846, tipografía de Manuel Payna*, translated into English, in part inaccurately, by Albert C. Ramsey in 1850. This translation omits some of the most revealing paragraphs in the final chapter of the Spanish edition. Among those men listed as editors or contributors appears the name don Ramón Ortiz. The government of Santa Anna issued an order from Puebla on February 11, 1854, that all copies of this volume be seized and burned. A severe penalty was imposed on anyone who possessed the book.
14. AAD, roll 11, frame 162, December 18, 1847.
15. John Bartlett claimed he had heard Ramón Ortiz use the words "the deepest channel" as the controversial boundary between the two nations was being discussed, and he wrote the priest asking him if had inserted these words into the text. Ortiz responded that he was a member of the Mexican Congress when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was being negotiated, but that the phrase had been inserted by other Mexican commissioners present at the time.
16. Col. Washington's displeasure at Ortiz is clearly reflected here, but Twitchell does not represent the quarrel between the commissioner and Guadalupe Miranda correctly when he blames the methods Ortiz used to recruit colonists in northern New Mexico. Ortiz's refusal to support Santa Anna in the amended Plan de Guadalupe caused him to be removed as commissioner for emigration.

17. These requirements can be found in the original La Mesilla grant; to this day the same words are repeated in every complete abstract regarding a transfer of property within the grant.
18. National Archives, Record Group 59, M-184-1, Consulate of the United States at El Paso del Norte, México, January 18, 1853, to Hon. Edward Everett, Secretary of State, Washington, D.C.
19. *El Centinela* (Chihuahua), Saturday, April 16, 1853; William Carr Lane to d. Antonio Jacques and d. Tomás Zuloaga, March 23, 1853.
20. Secretaría de la Mitra de la Ciudad de Durango to Ramón Ortiz (in a private collection).
21. AAD, *Cartas Diversos*, Alejo García Conde to Bishop José Antonio Zubiría, March 26, 1853.
22. Juárez Archives (J/A), reel 63, frame 63, 1855.
23. AAD, *Cartas Diversos*, Ramón Ortiz to Bishop Zubiría, May 11, 1852.
24. In *Juárez en Chihuahua*, Jorge V. Tamayo quotes a letter from Joaquín Ruis saying that Mariano Samaniego was a *sotánista*, a partisan of the clergy, but references in the Juárez Archives suggest that Ramón Ortiz's nephew sided with Benito Juárez.
25. AAD, *Cartas Diversos*, Paso, May 2, 1859, Ramón Ortiz to Luis Rubio.
26. Two of the many petitions were one with four long pages of signatures from Paso del Norte residents, including many Indians, dated February 28, 1871, and another from *vecinos* (citizens) of Paso del Norte dated March 22, 1872.
27. It is not the purpose of this writer to analyze the depths of his statement. The letter is quoted only to show the self doubt, the sincerity, the contrition of this man.
28. AAD, reel 12, frame 275 (UTEP): on March 23, 1874, Bishop Salinas orders Ortiz to return as pastor to his *parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, but now subject to the *Vicariato Foraneo de Chihuahua*.

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The Case of Manuel X. Harmony

From the Chihuahua Trail to the U.S. Supreme Court

Mark L. Gardner



ON MAY 27, 1846, FOURTEEN OX-DRAWN WAGONS pulled out of Independence, Missouri, at the head of the Santa Fe Trail.¹ Beneath their osnaberg covers and hickory bows rode several tons of merchandise belonging to one man, Manuel X. Harmony, a resident of New York. Harmony intended to trade his goods in the Mexican provinces, and it probably would have been a fairly routine trip except for one small problem with timing: the United States had declared war on Mexico on May 13. That war caught up with Harmony the following month at Pawnee Fork, near the junction with the Arkansas River, in the form of a squadron of U.S. dragoons. They carried orders that required Harmony and the other overland traders temporarily gathered there to await Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny and his Santa Fe-bound Army of the West. Thus marked the beginning of military interference in Harmony's trading expedition that ultimately led to its ruin ten months later. Or at least that is what Harmony would claim.

Little is known of this intriguing merchant. According to a statement he made in 1848, he was a native of Spain but had lived in New York City for twenty years and had been a naturalized U.S. citizen for the past ten (Harmony Report, 28). New York City directories published in 1845 and 1846 show Harmony boarding at the New York Hotel at 721 Broadway (Doggett 1845:162, 1846:175). He was a nephew of successful merchant Peter Harmony, and before 1846 was a member of Peter Harmony's Nephews & Co., a shipping and commission firm located at 63½ Broadway. But he left the family business on January 1, 1846, probably so that he could organize his trading expedition to Mexico.²

We can only guess at Harmony's reasons for entering the overland trade. Although he had never personally taken goods to Mexico before, Peter Harmony's Nephews & Co. counted several Mexican traders among its customers, and Manuel Harmony no doubt availed himself of the opportunity to interview these individuals about the trade and the profits to be had. Also, the 1846 season promised even greater returns because of the passage of the Drawback Act by Congress the previous year. This act allowed for rebates of U.S. customs duties on foreign goods re-exported from the U.S. in their original packages to Santa Fe and Chihuahua. Before the passage of this act, overland traders had been hit with both American and Mexican duties on their European goods. Harmony's merchandise, which he estimated to be worth \$38,739 at Independence, had all been entered for drawback

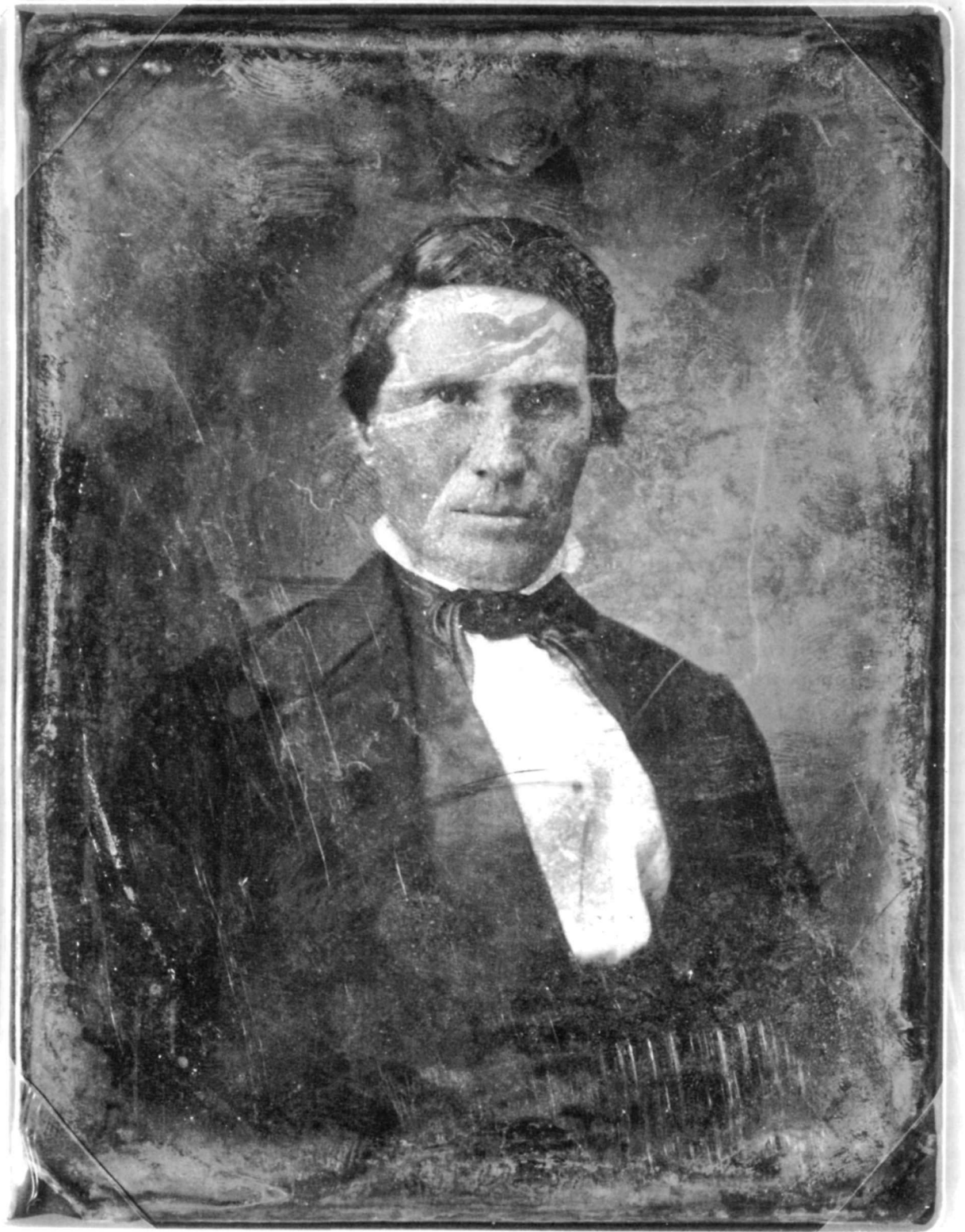


Fig. 21.1

Alexander W. Doniphan, colonel of the First Regiment Missouri Mounted Volunteers, from a daguerreotype by Matthew Brady. Library of Congress LC-US262-109945-802266.

(Harmony Report, 7 and 11. For information on the Drawback Act, see Gardner 1993).

After about twenty days spent at Pawnee Fork, Harmony and his fellow traders were finally allowed to proceed to Bent's Fort, where he arrived with his wagons around July 26 (Harmony Report, 7). A few days later, when Colonel Kearny released three Mexican spies captured earlier at the fort, Harmony obtained permission from the American commander to accompany them to New Mexico, leaving his wagons to follow the army. It was to be a short excursion, however. Captain Henry Smith Turner of the dragoons wrote in his journal on August 2 that "Mr. Harmony who started for Santa Fe a few days ago has returned a little alarmed." Turner does not reveal the cause of Harmony's distress (*St. Louis Daily Reveille*, September 8, 1846; Turner 1966:67).

Kearny and his Army of the West marched into Santa Fe without a fight on August 18. Harmony arrived at the capital with his train of wagons seven days later. Anxious to proceed to Chihuahua with his goods, and hoping to make up for lost time, Harmony purchased 144 mules at \$75 apiece to replace his slow oxen. But this effort was for nought. The trader was informed that he could not leave Santa Fe until Kearny said so. That permission finally came about September 25.³ Harmony traveled 157 miles south to the ruins of Valverde and set up camp with other overland merchants who were eagerly awaiting news of General John E. Wool's expected capture of Chihuahua before venturing into Mexican-controlled territory with their goods (Harmony Report, 8; Gardner 1993:30).

About November 28, Englishman George Frederick Ruxton arrived at Valverde from Chihuahua with important news for the stalled traders. He carried a circular from Governor Angel Trías addressed to the customs officers of the State of Chihuahua which announced that foreign traders would be allowed to enter the state with their goods as long as they paid the duties specified and replaced their American teamsters with Mexicans. Distrustful of Governor Trías, nearly all the American merchants decided to ignore the circular, but the Mexican and English merchants were willing to comply with its conditions—anything to get their goods to market. Harmony, although a U.S. citizen, came prepared on this expedition with a Spanish passport and considered himself safe to take advantage of the circular as well. Interestingly, though, Harmony apparently did not feel compelled to dismiss the American teamsters with his train (Connelley 1907:276–279 and 83, respectively; Harmony Report, 10–11 and 45; Abert 1966:66–67).

Harmony struck camp at Valverde and made it as far as Fray Cristóbal, fifteen miles to the south, when the U.S. Army again intervened. A detachment of the First Regiment Missouri Mounted Volunteers came up on his trail with orders not to let any traders proceed towards Chihuahua until the arrival of the regiment's commander, Colonel Alexander Doniphan. Doniphan, who was then concluding a campaign against the Navajo Indians, had been ordered with his regiment to join General Wool at Chihuahua. Harmony signed a petition dated December 9 with several other merchants protesting the forced detention, but to no avail. When Doniphan finally arrived at the Fray Cristóbal camp, in mid-December, he denied Harmony's request to travel in advance of the army. The merchant caravan must follow in the rear (Harmony Report, 8 and 46–48; Gardner 1993:31–32).

The journey south was uneventful for the merchants. Not so for Doniphan, whose Missouri volunteers met and defeated a superior Mexican force at Brazito, approximately 30 miles above El Paso, on Christmas day. The Missourians occupied El Paso two days later and Harmony's train rolled into the Mexican town about the twenty-eighth. Doniphan decided to remain at El Paso until an artillery reinforcement he had sent for could arrive from Santa Fe. This meant another delay for the merchants, but Harmony and some of the other traders tried to make the best of the situation by breaking out their goods and doing business with the locals. Despite so many merchants at one place, Harmony actually sold \$7,000 worth of merchandise as well as two of his wagons and twenty mules (Gardner 1993:32–33; Harmony Report, 8).



Fig. 21.2

Church and plaza, El Paso del Norte (present-day Juarez, Mexico), ca. 1850. (Bartlett 1854)

On February 8, Doniphan began his march to Chihuahua. Knowing that General Wool was not at Chihuahua and that his Missourians would very likely meet a strong Mexican force before reaching that place, Doniphan issued an order on February 9 requiring the American traders and their teamsters, then camped near the Presidio of San Elizario, to form two companies of infantry. It also directed the merchant caravan to fall in behind his column. That same day, Lt. Col. David Dawson Mitchell arrived at Harmony's camp with Doniphan's order (Connelley 1907:396–398; Harmony Report, 8 and 31–32). This turn of events was not to Harmony's liking. It was later said that Harmony "believed that Doniphan would be whipped, and that his goods, being found under the protection of an enemy, would be seized and destroyed. He preferred, therefore, to go to Mexico as a friend rather than under the protection of one who was not able to protect him" (*The Congressional Globe*, March 6, 1851). He told Mitchell he would not comply with Doniphan's order; he would instead return to New Mexico with his goods. Mitchell responded to Harmony's protests by sternly telling the trader that if the order was not obeyed he would take armed possession of his train and force him to accompany the army. And to that effect, the officer returned the next day with a detachment of troops and new orders from Doniphan commanding Mitchell to "*compel, if necessary*" the trains of Harmony and Mexican trader J. Calistro Porras, who was also hesitant to continue, to fall in behind the American force. All American citizens in their employ would be enrolled in the Traders Battalion (Connelley 1907:396–398; Harmony Report, 8 and 32).

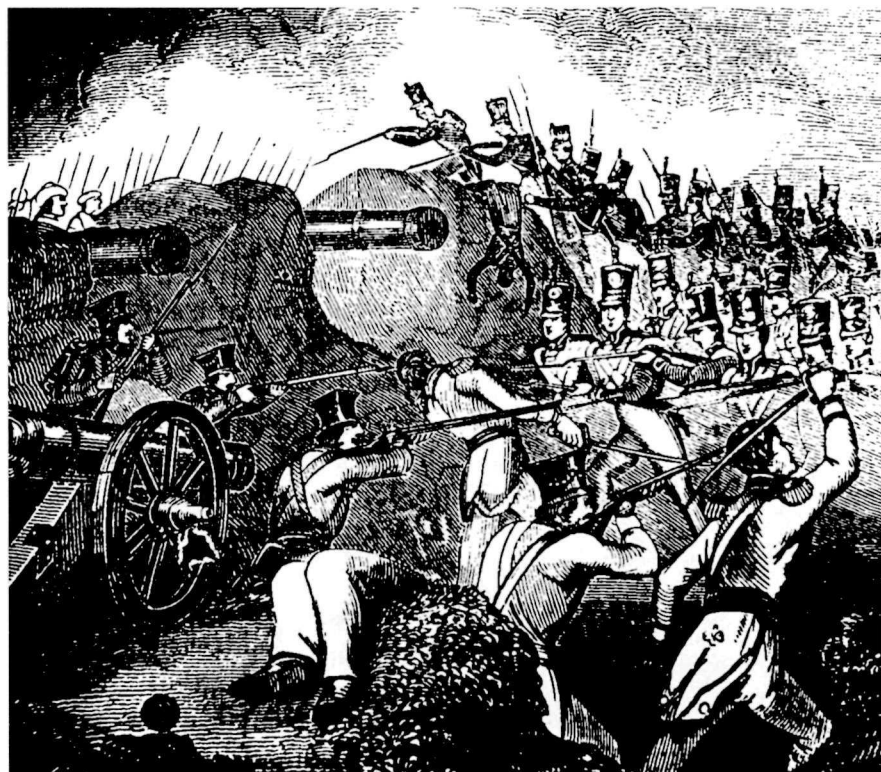
Sometime after Mitchell's first visit, Harmony and Porras had hidden their mules away from their camp. They now claimed that the animals had been stolen by Apache Indians, and thus there was no

way they could move their wagons. Unfortunately for the traders, Mitchell did not buy their story, and upon being threatened, the merchants produced the mules (Bieber 1936:249–250; Connelley 1907:398–399). Yet Harmony still objected, with the result that Mitchell made good his promise of the previous day and took armed possession of his train (Harmony Report, 32–33).

The reasons that Mitchell provided later for forcing the merchants to accompany the army were that the wagons and their contents could be used to make a “field work” if the army was attacked in the open; the American teamsters were wanted, as previously noted, to increase the army’s fighting strength; and, lastly, it was deemed necessary in order to “prevent this large amount of property from falling into the hands of the enemy, because it would have aided him in paying and equipping his troops” (Harmony Report, 44). Volunteer John T. Hughes wrote that the traders could not be permitted to turn back “without endangering the safety of all; for the only safety was in union” (Connelley 1907:399). Also, Harmony’s desire to abandon the expedition appears to have generated some resentment as well as some resulting suspicions regarding his intentions. Doniphan later admitted to Harmony that he had been influenced by other traders who “believed that you were unfriendly to us, and that you were anxious for the success of the Mexicans.”⁴

At least seven of Harmony’s men were subsequently mustered into Company B of the Traders Battalion. Harmony, his wagons, goods, and men removed from his control, began to formulate how he would obtain remuneration from the U.S. government. The first thing he did was to write a formal protest in which he recounted the various actions of the American army that had been detrimental to his trading expedition. The protest was aimed specifically, however, at the recent deeds of Doniphan and Mitchell. This was prepared and sworn to on February 18 at Carrizal, about 100 miles below El Paso, in front of Edward James Glasgow, a fellow trader and the newly appointed U.S. commercial agent for Chihuahua (Harmony Report, 33 and 14–17, respectively). Ten days later, Doniphan’s force defeated an entrenched Mexican army at the Battle of Sacramento, 18 miles from the city of Chihuahua.

Fig. 21.3
A romanticized depiction
of the Battle of Sacramento,
February 28, 1847. (Frost 1882)



Shortly before the battle, Harmony obtained permission to remove his wagons (now ten in number) to a hacienda eight miles away but then changed his mind, fearing that by resuming possession of his goods it would be impossible to obtain compensation from the United States if his train was later seized by Mexican authorities (Williams 1883:81–82). Thus, Harmony’s wagons remained with the merchant caravan under Doniphan’s command, and as such were employed early in the battle to mask the strength of the U.S. force. The wagons were subsequently held in the rear to serve as breastworks in case the Missourians were repelled. The Traders Battalion, charged with protecting the caravan, was never called into the fray, but a cannonball did smash into one of Harmony’s wagons (Gardner 1993:33; Harmony Report, 35).

A detachment of Doniphan’s troops occupied Chihuahua on March 1 and the commander himself marched victorious into the city on the second (Connelley 1907:421–422). Harmony’s wagons were brought there the same day, although he did not arrive in the city until the sixth. Harmony then met with Doniphan and informed the colonel that he would not accept his goods back. According to Harmony, Doniphan suggested that he “sell the goods for what he could, and look to the United States government for the loss sustained.” Harmony was willing to accept this proposal on the condition that Doniphan “give him an order upon the government to that effect,” something Doniphan was unwilling to do. They then agreed that Harmony would accept the merchandise under protest (Harmony Report, 9). But new concerns quickly arose. Doniphan announced that he intended to march out of Chihuahua in one week, not nearly enough time for the traders to sell the approximately \$1 million worth of goods they had brought into the city. The merchants consequently persuaded the American commander to enter into treaty negotiations with the Chihuahua government that would provide for their protection once the army had evacuated. But these negotiations failed (Gardner 1993:33–35, 117).

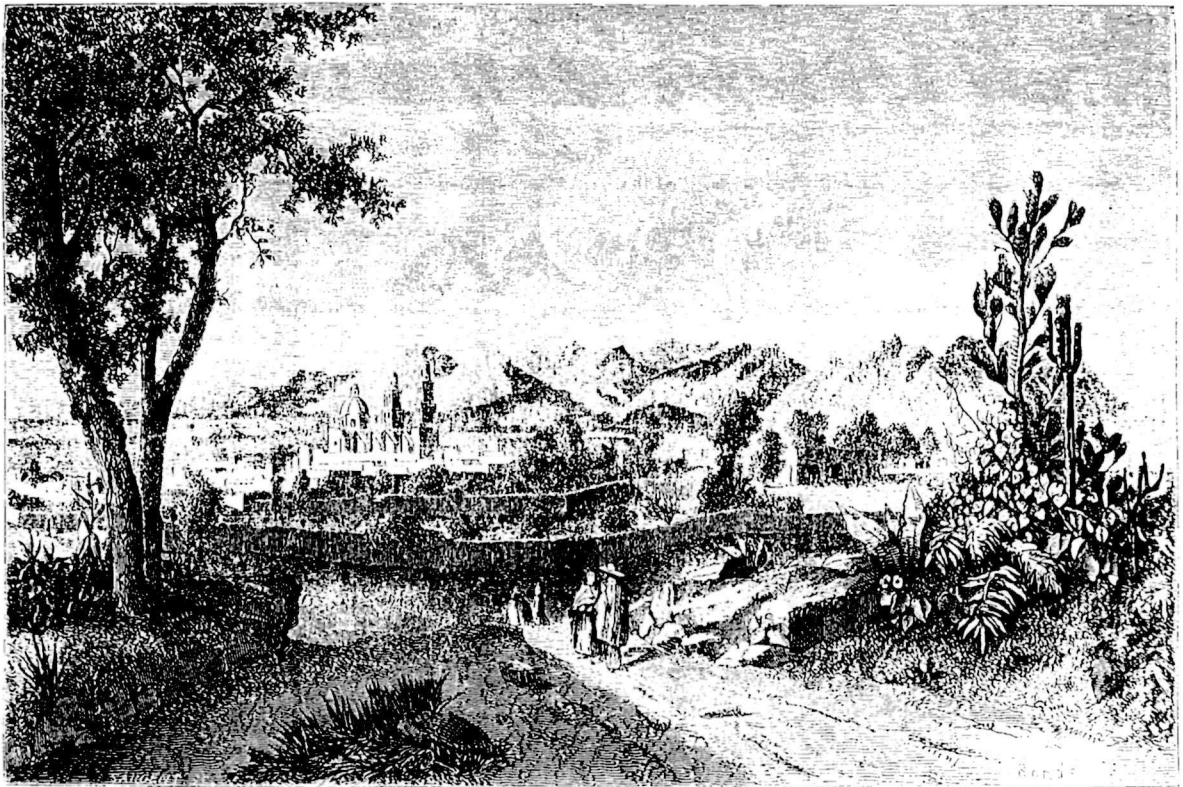


Fig. 21.4

View of Chihuahua, after a sketch by M. Rondé, 1849. From Le Tour du Monde [Librairie Hachette, Paris] 1861.

On March 23, upon learning that a treaty had not been obtained, Harmony wrote to Doniphan expressing his concern for the safety of the traders and their goods once Doniphan left. He reminded the colonel that his goods had been brought there against his will and by Doniphan's order and because of this requested that that officer provide him with protection against the Mexicans. This letter was not answered, and Harmony sent another on April 3. "[S]hould you consider any notice of my communications unnecessary," he wrote, "I shall content myself by stating to you that it is my intention to look to the United States for indemnity for any loss, damages, or expenses which I have, or may sustain, by consequence of your having had my goods and property brought to this city against my will, and then abandoning the same without leaving sufficient forces for the protection thereof" (Harmony Report, 18).

On April 23, an express which Doniphan had dispatched to Saltillo the previous month returned with orders from General Zachary Taylor for the Missourians to join the general's command. Taylor stated that the traders could remain in Chihuahua or go to Saltillo under Doniphan's protection. After receiving from Doniphan a copy of the portion of Taylor's order pertaining to the merchants, Harmony addressed a letter to the colonel informing him that his mule teams, which Doniphan had "broken down and rendered useless" on the march to Chihuahua, were not capable of conveying his goods to Saltillo. And if he stayed, his goods would be subject to confiscation because of a decree issued by the Chihuahua government on April 2 prohibiting the circulation and sale of merchandise that had been imported under the protection of the U.S. forces. Harmony also believed that he would be "subject to maltreatment" if he remained behind, primarily because of his Spanish heritage.⁵ He demanded, then, either protection for his goods or "a reasonable and fair price for them." Otherwise they would become the property of Doniphan (Harmony Report, 19 and 38). Harmony again received no reply.

The Missourians began their evacuation on April 25 (Connelley 1907:108). That same day Harmony made an inventory of his remaining merchandise and deposited it on the premises of the Spanish vice consul. On the twenty-seventh, he signed a statement in the presence of Edward Glasgow formally turning these goods over to Doniphan and then wrote an order to the vice consul instructing him to hold the goods "subject to the order and disposal of" the colonel (Harmony Report, 24–25 and 41). Most of that which Harmony abandoned was cloth, largely bleached shirting and various prints, but amounting to more than 168,000 yards! Also listed in the inventory are a box of 33 bonnets, 2 boxes of artificial flowers, 8 bronze crosses, 1,500 mass beads, 1,200 hair pins, 2 dozen pair gilt combs, and numerous other odd items (Harmony Report, 20–22).

Harmony left Chihuahua in a "large carriage drawn by several mules." He was provided with an escort of 25 soldiers and was instructed to keep in contact with the army. The merchant traveled in relative luxury, for within his carriage was said to be "all the refreshments to be obtained in Chihuahua" (Connelley 1907:477, n. 119).⁶ His most valuable cargo, however, was a small bundle of handwritten documents: copies of all his protests and letters to Doniphan as well as depositions made by his former employees, important evidence that would help him press his claim once back in the United States.

Harmony arrived in New York sometime during the summer. He appears to have first presented a claim for loss of property and damages to the War Department. He next drew up a petition and submitted it to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. "[B]y reason and in consequence of the acts of the troops of the United States," Harmony pleaded to Congress, "his [Harmony's] trading expedition has been utterly broken up, his expenditures rendered useless, and his goods and merchandise wholly lost to him" (Harmony Report, 11). This petition was presented in the House on December 22 and referred to the Committee of Claims.⁷ Harmony continued to gather evidence for

some months after that date in the form of statements from fellow merchants and former members of Doniphan's command (including Doniphan and Lieutenant Colonel Mitchell). These were added to his original petition.

Harmony requested indemnity in the amount of \$102,956.89. For his merchandise alone he claimed \$62,106.89, what it was worth at Chihuahua prices. Also enumerated were damages to mules and wagons "for extra and over fatigued marches" while under Doniphan's control (\$8,312), expenses of the men and animals during that same period plus compensation for their use and that of his wagons for the "defence and protection of the United States troops" (\$5,000), six months' extra expenses for detention and delay on the road (\$6,000), and fifteen mules and a horse lost to Harmony (\$1,700). Thirteen months' interest on the value of his goods from December 1, 1846, to January 1, 1848, estimated at 7% was another \$4,838. Harmony subtracted \$5,000 from the total of the above, the amount of the Mexican duty he would have paid on his ten wagons, yet he claimed an additional \$20,000 in damages "sustained by the petitioner from the loss of time, use of his money, expenses incurred by him in presenting his claim, &c., &c." (Harmony Report, 26-28).

In the published report on Harmony's claim, dated March 30, 1848, the committee found that Harmony did not have a right to compensation for damages or expenses that arose from the several delays he suffered at the hands of the military. However, they did feel that he was "entitled to a compensation for the value of his mules and wagons destroyed and injured, and for any damage arising from that cause, or from impressing his men into the service of the United States." Whether these damages were simply the value of his mules and wagons or could be found to embrace "the loss of his entire stock of goods" they felt should be determined by the Treasury Department. With this proviso, the committee reported "a bill for the relief of the petitioner" (Harmony Report, 6).

While Harmony's petition had received relatively prompt attention in the House, it would soon get caught up in the convoluted ways of Congress. For some reason, House Bill 388 never came up for a vote. Instead, Harmony's petition appears to have been referred to the House Committee on Military Affairs.⁸ It was the Senate, then, that first passed a bill for Harmony's relief, the vote taking place on February 22, 1849, more than a year after the petition had been submitted. This bill (No. 272), however, did not grant Harmony the total indemnity he had requested, his claim having "been cut down to the actual loss sustained" (*The Congressional Globe*, February 26, 1849). The Senate bill was subsequently sent to the House—where it stalled (*The Congressional Globe*, March 2, 1849).

This was the state of affairs when Harmony decided to change his tactics. Sometime in 1849, the merchant learned that David Dawson Mitchell of St. Louis, the veteran lieutenant colonel of Doniphan's expedition, was in New York City on a visit. Harmony immediately instigated a suit against Mitchell for seizing his property, an action of trespass, in the State of Chihuahua. After being notified of the litigation, Mitchell contacted the Secretary of the Interior and requested the aid of the U.S. government in the defense, and the U.S. district attorney was consequently instructed to assist with the case (*The Congressional Globe*, March 6, 1851). *Harmony vs. Mitchell* was heard in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York. Mitchell entered a plea of not guilty (Williams 1883:76).

Mitchell's counsel argued that the defendant was simply carrying out his commanding officer's "lawful order, which he was bound to obey." He claimed that Doniphan was justified in seizing the train because Harmony, with "a full knowledge of the war," had gone to Mexico to



Fig. 21.5
Lt. Col. David Dawson Mitchell.
Courtesy author.

trade with its people and “to afford aid to the same in said war.” And for that matter, Mitchell was himself justified by his “own . . . authority as an officer.” In addition, the merchant had rightfully been forced to remain with the army in order to prevent his goods from falling into the hands of the enemy. Also, the seizure was justified because the property was taken for public use. And, lastly, the counsel asserted that Harmony had resumed possession and control of his goods at Chihuahua, and thus Mitchell was relieved of liability for the subsequent loss (Williams 1883:76, 83).

After a fairly quick trial, the jury found for Harmony. The facts had shown that the continuance of the overland trade with Mexico during the war had been sanctioned by the American government, and the places where Harmony had engaged in trade were then under American control. Thus, Mitchell was not justified in seizing the merchant’s goods on the grounds that he was “trading with the enemy” (interestingly, this was not one of the original grounds furnished by Mitchell to Harmony in January of 1848, before the suit).⁹ As to the other arguments of the defense, Mitchell’s counsel failed to prove to the jury that there was an “immediate and impending” danger at the time of the seizure that would justify commandeering the train for the public use or to keep it from being captured by the Mexicans. The jury also found that Harmony did not resume possession of his goods, as claimed by the defense. Of most importance to Mitchell, however, was that because the seizure itself was judged to be unlawful, simply following orders was no protection for his actions: “An order to commit a trespass can afford no justification to the person by whom it was executed” (Williams 1883:83–85 and 76, respectively).

Mitchell’s ill-fated trip to New York City in 1849 was going to cost him \$90,806.44 plus \$5,048.94 in court costs (Williams 1883:77). But it did not end here. Because Mitchell had no property in New York, a copy of the court record was sent to Missouri and another suit begun in the circuit court for St. Louis County. Mitchell again had the assistance of the U.S. district attorney there as well as his own counsel, and again he lost. This time the judgment was for “upwards of one hundred and two thousand dollars.”¹⁰

Sometime after his loss in the New York court, Mitchell submitted a petition to Congress requesting that body to protect him against any judgments resulting from the case. It appears that the petition was examined by both the Senate Committee on Military Affairs and the Committee on Finance, and on February 28, 1851, an amendment was introduced to a general appropriation bill that called for the payment of the judgment against Mitchell when, in the opinion of the Attorney General, that judgment was considered final. Considerable debate followed, in which the details of the seizure, Harmony’s later petition, and the subsequent court case were hashed over. Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, strongly argued for the amendment. But the debate eventually focused on a point of order. According to a rule of the Senate, no amendment could be made to a general appropriation bill that was to “provide for a private claim.” The Senate adjourned for the day before deciding the point (*The Congressional Globe*, March 6, 1851). When consideration of the appropriation bill was resumed on March 3, Senator David R. Atchison of Missouri immediately withdrew the amendment. He stated that he did so at Mitchell’s request, the petitioner not wishing to “embarrass the bill” (*The Congressional Globe*, March 7, 1851).

Meanwhile, both the Attorney General and the Solicitor of the Treasury had been reviewing the case to see if it could be appealed (*The Congressional Globe*, March 6, 1851). In November of 1851 it was brought before the U.S. Supreme Court on a writ of error. The main contention of the appellants was that the judge who presided at the circuit court trial had given erroneous instructions to the jury. In particular, it was claimed that the judge had taken upon himself the “decision of questions arising on the testimony, which it was the exclusive province of the jury to determine,” thus improperly influencing their decision (Williams 1883).

While *Mitchell vs. Harmony* was pending before the Supreme Court, a report on Mitchell's petition was presented to the Senate on January 27, 1852. Submitted with the report was a bill (No. 161) for the relief of Mitchell. The Senate version of the bill was not published, but it seems that it called simply for the payment of the judgment won by Harmony in Missouri. This was passed on February 9 and was forwarded to the House. The House then passed the bill, but with several important amendments that took into account the writ of error then before the Supreme Court. These amendments were agreed to by the Senate on March 8 and the bill was signed into law on the eleventh (*The Congressional Globe*, January 28, February 7, February 11, and March 10, 1852).

Entitled "An Act for the Relief of Lieutenant-Colonel Mitchell, of the State of Missouri," the statute called for the Attorney General "to prosecute the writ of error pending before the Supreme Court . . . without cost to" Mitchell, to institute proceedings in St. Louis to stay the carrying out of the judgment there until the writ of error could be decided, to "cause such security to be entered by the United States as shall indemnify and save said Mitchell harmless against said judgment," and, once the U.S. Attorney General certified that the writ of error had failed and that "no further steps can be taken at law or in equity whereby to avoid the payment of said judgment," the Secretary of the Treasury was to "liquidate and satisfy said judgment, damages, and costs, out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated" (Minot 1855:727).

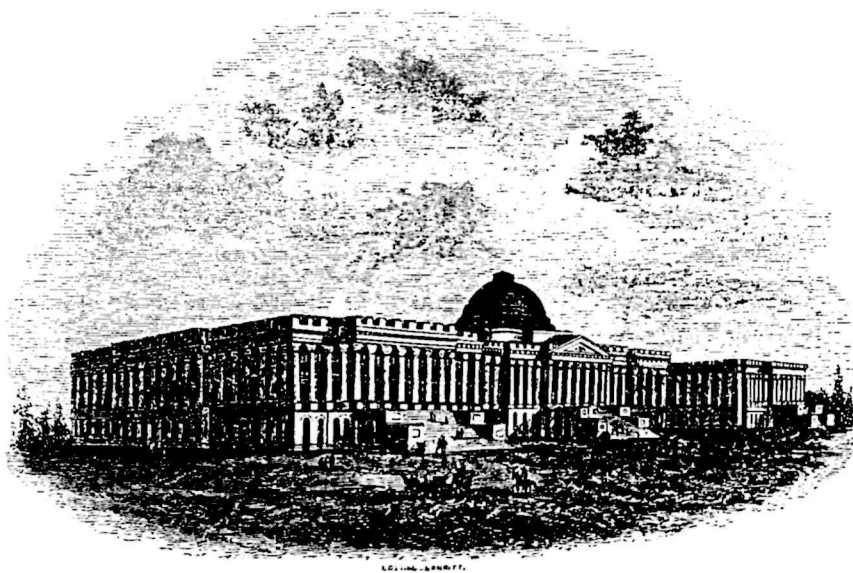


Fig. 21.6

At the time of *Mitchell v. Harmony*, the Supreme Court was held in a room in the U.S. Capitol's north wing, beneath the Senate Chamber. One observer in 1852 commented that the room was "an apartment entirely inappropriate to the dignity of this high tribunal." From Harper's New Monthly Magazine, December 1852.

On May 12, 1852, the Supreme Court handed down its decision. The opinion of the court, delivered by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, was that there was "no error in the instructions given by the Circuit Court, and that the judgment must be affirmed, with costs." Interest on the lower court judgment, figured at 6% interest from November 9, 1850 (the date that judgment was signed) to May 14, 1852, amounted to \$8,706.85, making the final judgment against Mitchell \$104,562.23 (Williams 1883:85, 89–90). It lacked only a few days of being six years since Manuel Harmony's wagons had rolled out of Independence, Missouri, but his trading expedition to Chihuahua had finally paid off.

Have the past 150 years shed any additional light on this obscure but intriguing case? Yes. It has also raised some questions. For instance, in his petition to Congress, Harmony claimed that because all his "means and credit" had been "gratuitously applied to purchasing and procuring supplies" for

Doniphan's army while on the march to Chihuahua, he had "no means to purchase animals for transporting my goods, &c., to Saltillo, or any place of safety" once Doniphan announced his intentions to leave. But if Harmony had indeed used up all his means, then how was he able to stock his carriage for the journey to Saltillo with "all the refreshments to be obtained in Chihuahua," as remembered by one of his escort? Another discrepancy is found in an assertion apparently made by Harmony, or his counsel, during the course of the New York trial. It was either stated or the court was led to believe that Harmony left Independence on his trading expedition before knowledge of the declaration of war had reached that place (Williams 1883:127; *The Congressional Globe*, March 6, 1851). But this was not the case, for the declaration of war *was* known there. In fact, in a letter from Independence dated May 27 (the very day Harmony claims to have departed that place) trader Edward James Glasgow wrote of the volunteers who were then enlisting for the Santa Fe expedition (Gardner 1993:79).

Was Harmony's trading expedition truly "broken up . . . and his goods and merchandise wholly lost to him"? If we look at what happened to the other merchants who arrived in Chihuahua with the army, it would appear that Harmony might have been able to salvage his venture if he had chosen to, although it would not have been accomplished without some risk. Several merchants, including at least eight Americans, remained behind with their goods after Doniphan's evacuation (not necessarily by choice) and were even able to negotiate their own treaty with the Mexican authorities. Yet, as the months wore on, their situation degenerated (Gardner 1993:38–39). Of the period preceding General Sterling Price's invasion of Chihuahua in March 1848 (see Chapter 19), Edward Glasgow wrote that they had "occasionally been in a little danger from our good friends the Mexicans" (Gardner 1993:135). But Price's re-conquest, coupled with the end of the war, brought an end to their predicament.

Despite the numerous difficulties and delays the traders were subjected to, there is no evidence that those associated with Doniphan's expedition were financially ruined as a direct result of it. For some, it was the opposite. The firm of Connelly & Glasgow, which followed Doniphan to Chihuahua with several wagons of merchandise, estimated in July 1847 that they would make from \$18,000 to \$20,000 in net profits on the venture, and this in the middle of a war. Yet for about a half dozen merchants who wanted to depart with Doniphan, there was no choice left but to sell their remaining stock at a sacrifice to a Chihuahua trader. However, those individuals in this group that can be identified are known to have continued in various mercantile endeavors for some time after the Mexican War, so it seems unlikely that they lost heavily, if they indeed lost at all (Gardner 1993:37, 119, 130, 157 n. 114).

Yes, Harmony could have resumed possession of his goods and scrambled to dispose of them in competition with the many other overland traders who were in the same fix. He could even have risked staying behind, as did a few. But the seizure of his train had handed Harmony an opportunity. It was an opportunity to realize the full potential from his expedition by seeking remuneration from the U.S. government, and he was not about to do anything that would jeopardize that claim, a claim that eventually generated more than \$100,000 for a trading expedition estimated to be worth a total of \$48,739 at Independence (as noted above, \$7,000 worth of goods were sold by Harmony at El Paso). And just what was the fate of those goods abandoned to Doniphan in Chihuahua? Doniphan rode off without them. On June 7, 1847, despite the strong protests of the Spanish vice consul, the Mexican authorities confiscated Harmony's (or Doniphan's) wares.¹¹

And then there is the question of Doniphan's actions. Was there really any reason for keeping the merchants from proceeding to Chihuahua in front of his army? There most certainly was. George Ruxton, the Englishman who had carried Governor Trías's circular to the traders' camp at Valverde, wrote later that

it was a great object of the Governor of Chihuahua that they [the traders] should proceed to that city and pay the usual duties to him, which otherwise would have been payable to the customhouse of Santa Fé. The government being entirely without funds, and anxious to raise and equip a body of troops to oppose the advance of the Americans, the arrival of the caravan would have been most opportune, since, at the usual rate of duties, viz. 500 dollars for each waggon, the amount to be received by the government would exceed 100,000 dollars (Ruxton 1973:157).

One very large train did escape Doniphan's control while he was at El Paso, making a beeline straight for Chihuahua. Although its desertion did not affect the outcome of the military expedition, one Missouri volunteer claimed that these merchants disposed "readily of many of their goods to the Mexicans for the army" (Gibson in Bieber 1935:327–328).

The real issue still, as it was at the time, is the seizure. With informed hindsight we can look back and see that the commandeering of Harmony's wagons meant very little to the success of Doniphan's march on Chihuahua. The wagons were never needed for defense, and even if they had been, Harmony's ten wagons would not have been missed from the 300+ that were reported to have accompanied the expedition. Considering Harmony's small number of wagons, there could not have been very many American teamsters in Harmony's employ, at least not enough to make much of an impact on the strength of the Traders Battalion. Despite any suspicions that Mitchell and Doniphan may have had at the time concerning Harmony's designs, these did not justify their actions—Harmony had done nothing but announce his intention to return to New Mexico. A grave mistake was made in "peremptorily" seizing his wagons, a mistake that was recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court.

And what of Harmony? His whereabouts and activities after winning his judgment are unknown. He does not appear in the New York City census for 1860. He could have died or perhaps he returned to his native Spain. What his case reveals, though, is that a successful merchant of the nineteenth century had to be as skilled in politics and the law as he was in the counting house, as comfortable astride a mule on the Chihuahua Trail as he was navigating the halls of Congress. ♣

NOTES

1. U. S. Congress, House, [Report on petition of] *Manuel X. Harmony*, H. R. Rep. 458, 30th Congress, 1st session, 1848 (Serial 525), 7. This document will hereinafter be cited as Harmony Report. Trader William Glasgow wrote from a camp north of Independence on May 27 that Harmony's wagons "left yesterday." See Gardner 1993:81.
2. Announcement of P. Harmony's Nephews & Co., New York, January 1, 1846, Manuel Alvarez Papers, reel 1, frame 523. New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe.
3. Harmony Report, 8. The St. Louis *Missouri Republican* of November 7, 1846, reported that several overland traders had left Santa Fe for Chihuahua about September 20.
4. U.S. Congress, *Additional Documents in the Claim of M. X. Harmony*, Senate Miscellaneous Document 11, 30th Congress, 2nd session, 1849 (Serial 533), 1. See also Marcellus Ball Edwards's comment on Harmony in Bieber 1936:250; and Williams 1883:83.
5. Harmony was "particularly obnoxious, it seems, to the Mexicans, because he was a native of Spain and came with a hostile, invading army" (Williams 1883:82). Also, a "Mexican Government Extra" had been published in Chihuahua on February 17 concerning the American invasion which reported that "A certain Owens and a Spaniard named Don Manuel (Harmony) have offered them [Doniphan's force] resources of money when they occupy this capital." See Edwards 1847:178–179.
6. This information was provided to historian Connelley by a member of Harmony's escort, Odon Guitar.
7. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States*, 30th Congress, 1st session, 1847–48 (Serial 513), 145.
8. Digested Summary and Alphabetical List of Private Claims Which Have Been Presented to the House of Representatives from the First to the Thirty-First Congress . . . , 2 vols (1853; reprint ed., Genealogical Publishing, Baltimore, 1970), 2:32–33; *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States*, 31st Congress, 1st session, 1849–50 (Serial 566), 272.

9. Mitchell's counsel would argue in the Supreme Court that the "true point of the defense" here had been "misconceived." It was not that Harmony was engaged in an unlawful trade with the enemy but that he "had the 'design' to engage in such trade, and thereby afford aid to the enemy" (Williams 1883:77). Again, this was not one of the reasons previously given by Mitchell.
10. U. S. Congress, Senate, *Report* [on memorial of David D. Mitchell], Sen. Rep. Com. 53, 32nd Congress, 1st session, 1852 (Serial 630), 1-2.
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La Caravana

A Vehicle for the Transmission of Culture

J. Paul Taylor y Romero



LA CARAVANA IN A COLLECTIVE SENSE was a vehicle, a real moving vehicle, which linked Santa Fe, the northern outpost in the kingdom, with New Mexico's more southern neighbors in Durango, Zacatecas and beyond. It was a vehicle made up of ox-drawn wagons and pack mules carrying freight to sustain the missions and the colonies in the north and to provide those items of trade lacking in the south. But the caravan was more than a freight line; it was a vehicle for the transmission of the elements of culture: it carried people who carried ideas and ways of life in an unending movement north to south and back again. There is evidence of these cultural elements in the manifests—foods that were traded, types of clothing transported, religious objects used—but the stronger cultural identifiers were lodged in the heads and hearts of the people who traversed the trail. Interwoven in the lives of those who moved north and south on the trail were ideas and customs so ingrained that many of their origins seemed obscure or lost in time.

In their lives on the northern frontier—and it was all frontier, from Valle de Allende (Oñate's final stop before receiving permission to move north) to Santa Fe, all 800 miles of it—people looked to that which sustained the spirit. And the greatest sustainer of all was the Faith. Mystic and ritualistic in its own right, people added their own dimension, personalizing through prayer, through drama, through music and art forms to bring additional meaning and feeling to already deep traditions. And so La Caravana became, in a large sense, the instrument for spiritual and aesthetic development as well as material sustenance.

In this brief treatment of the caravan as a cultural instrument the spiritual and aesthetic elements of culture will be treated along with the material elements. They can best be so treated since ideas and deep feelings often take expressions in tangible forms: a religious belief becomes evident as a live drama is enacted in action and song; a feeling of longing is reflected in a song of travail; a feeling for a well-known and often heroic character is expressed in a *corrido*; an expression of devotion is created in a religious folk art form; a *dicho*, short in words and strong in punch, conveys a pointed message; a folk dance at a wedding reception reflects joy and rhythm.

Occasions for such forms of expression were numerous, but the institution which provided the greatest opportunity for expression was the church. From birth to death—from baptism to the

administration of the last rites—people from Parral in El Valle de Allende to Santa Fe participated in a cycle of church-connected traditions. Baptism then, as now, called for a gathering of family and friends to welcome the new member to the Faith. And in the style of those whose relationships spanned the trail of La Caravana, there was folk poetry as godparents with these words returned godchildren to parents after baptism:

Comadre, compadre, aquí está mi ahijado
Que de la iglesia salió
Con los santos sacramentos
Y el agua que recibió

And parents with these words received their child:

Recíbate, prenda mía
Que de la iglesia saliste
Con los santos sacramentos
Y el agua que recibiste

Such were the words uttered by *compadres* during the early days of the trail: and the words remain today in families with deep traditions.

The first step of the child's spiritual well-being was accomplished with baptism. Now the parents prayed for the survival of the child in the isolation of this northern province so that, by the will of God, the time would come for confirmation, communion, and marriage. Or, by the grace of God, Holy Orders. Teaching of *la doctrina* in preparation for Holy Communion was accomplished in a number of ways. In the towns with resident priests—and those were only the principal towns—the parish priest taught catechism. Bishop Tamarón, in one of his edicts, directed that the priests hear the daily recitation of catechism of Indians under their charge. Catechists—more often women, but sometimes men of the parish, versed in Catholic precepts—taught *la doctrina* by rote. The responsibility of religious instruction was sometimes assumed by the lady of the house. This was the case with doña Maria de la Luz Baca de Delgado of Santa Fe, whose life spanned the later part of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. Not only did she teach the children of her household catechism, she taught them to read. Maria de la Luz Baca was typical of many affluent women who assumed the responsibility of spiritual care of servants and their children.

Confirmation also called for celebration, but confirmation required a bishop, and bishop visitations were infrequent. Until 1851, the entire northern province was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Durango. The size of the jurisdiction was so extensive and travel so slow and difficult that *visitas* were infrequent. Bishop Pedro Tamarón y Romeral's complete diocesan visit required travel from October 22, 1759, to January 15, 1761. The previous visitation by Bishop Benito Crespo had been in 1730. Because of the infrequency of episcopal visitations the diversity of age of those confirmed was necessarily great. One can imagine the preparation required to receive Bishop Tamarón and the magnitude of the festivities when families gathered to be near as their loved ones were confirmed. At El Paso alone, Bishop Tamarón confirmed 1,742 villagers; 732 were confirmed in Albuquerque, 1,532 in Santa Fe, 2,584 in Chihuahua, and 1,056 in Parral.

A child during this period enjoyed the care and love of many—mother and father, grandmother, grandfather, aunts, godparents. And with this care came countless bits of advice, often in the form of *dichos*, such as these:

Júntate con los buenos
Y serás uno de ellos

Dime con quién andas
Y te diré quién eres

El que entra garando
Sale reparando

As young girls became young ladies dire predictions as to their future were suggested if they were not obedient. And some *cuentos* were illustrative of how elders moralized through a situational story to make their point about obedience.

In the early days of the trail, and even through the nineteenth century, marriage preparations were governed by rigid codes, most often involving negotiations by parents for the proper unions for their children. Social class distinctions, power bases in terms of community or political status, dowries, and the preservation and enhancement of family fortunes were all important considerations. The song "No Me Mires," a portion of which is quoted here, is a melodic example of expressed feeling by a young woman who was a victim of an arranged marriage. The song, part of the folk culture of New Mexico, is typical of the expression through music of feelings which resulted from an unhappy circumstance.

"No Me Mires"

No me mires por Dios te lo ruego	Don't look at me I entreat you
Ni recuerdes que yo fuí tu amada	And forget that I was ever your lover
Por desgracia me encuentro casada	Unfortunately, today I am married
Con un hombre que nunca lo amé	To a man that I never loved.

In addition to family considerations and church requirements, military officers had to have approval for marriage contracts. An example is the document signed by don Teodoro de Croix, governor and general commandant of the Interior Provinces of New Spain, on August 6, 1778, in Chihuahua, which authorized don Manuel Delgado to enter into a matrimonial contract with doña María Josefa Garcia de Noriega. The authorization reads

. . . Gonzando de las facultades que el Rey se ha dignado concederme, doy licencia a Don Manuel Delgado, Teniente del Presidio de Agua Verde, para que pueda contraer matrimonio con Doña María Garcia de Noriega vecino del pueblo de Paso del Norte, respecto a concurrir con la contrayrnte las cualidades requeridas.

Pero declaro que si no se justifica la formal existencia del dote correspondiente según mandado, no tendran derecho a las pensiones del Montepio Militar, la enunciada Doña María Josefa, ni sus hijos.

. . . Enjoying the faculties vested in me by the King, I hereby authorize don Manuel Delgado, Lieutenant of the Presidio of Agua Verde, to contract matrimony with doña María Josefa Garcia de Noriega, inhabitant of the village of Paso del Norte, subject to agreement with the party of the second part, as to the required qualities.

But I hereby declare that if she does not justify the formal existence of the corresponding dowry, according to my command, the right to the orphans and widows' pension shall be denied to the aforementioned doña María Josefa and her children.

Having completed the exactitudes of preparation, the marriage and attendant festivities took place with exhausting exhilaration. Miniature *caravanas* made their way from the groom's family home to the home of the bride, often to stay for days. The days were consumed with men's talk,

women's talk, *juegos infantiles*, food, drink, and music; the evenings with more of the same, but there was more formality and greater structure to evening activities. If there was dancing—and there generally was—daughters sat with mothers as proper chaperones on one side of the dance area while the boys and men gathered in groups on the other side, probably to discuss their latest achievements. Then there were countless trips outside on the part of the men for a *tragito de algo* or a possible rendezvous. Dances were numerous—the vals, the polka, the schotische, and with the extending influences of Napoleon, La Varsoviana. The musicians—often a group of four playing mandolins, guitars, violins, and coronets—were their own vocalists. Frequently everyone joined in for a favorite number; often a guest with talent was induced to perform.

Marriage brought another link to the extended family. The groom was now ready to assume a partnership with his father on the ranch or in a commercial establishment. Or, if there was less affluence, to add a room to the parents' dwelling and share in the toil on the family's or the landlord's holdings. The cycle was ready to repeat as a new generation was introduced to another layer of deep religious and family traditions.

But it was not all festivity and joy during those early days of La Caravana. Life spans were often short. Infant mortality was high. There were incursions and depredations by Indians who resented the intrusions of the settlers. There were droughts and floods and severe winters. Death was expected, and the Faith promised continuing life. The promise of a better place brought hope where there was tragedy, but even then the loss of a loved one was difficult to accept. With death, or expected death, the final drama was enacted. In the village of Mesilla, an aged friend who remembered life in the 1860s related that the family of a dying member swept and dampened the walkway and strewed flowers before the priest came to administer the last rites. She remembered the funerals of children, a touch of white in an otherwise blanket of black. Little girls dressed in white, "*mariposas, como angeles*," she said, carried the coffin of the dead child, followed by musicians and the mourners.

The *velorio*, the wake, provided the occasion for friends to pay respect, to meet, to eat and drink—to celebrate; it was a time for reminiscing about the deceased. It was the time for the paid crier to further accent the mournful atmosphere.

Llorenlo bien, llorado
Que se lo daré
Bien calmado,

the payor would say to the crier as coins were passed for a properly mournful *velorio*.

An unwritten standard was set for mourning in the early days of the Mesilla community: The family should remain at home nine days; mirrors were covered; a black mourning cloth was to be hung at the front entrance of the home. The length of time black was worn was determined by relationship: if the father died, the family wore black for two years; one year for the mother or husband; six months for a brother or sister; and three weeks for friends.

Testaments of faith follow the colonists even after death. The will of doña Rosa Bustamante de Ortiz of Santa Fe, which was filed in 1814, begins and ends with such testimonials.



Fig. 22.1

Painted wood ornament found in the mission church ruins at Pecos Pueblo.
Photo Jesse L. Nusbaum, ca. 1915. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, neg #41022.

No 3°

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Prov. del Nuevo Mexico.

Testamento Otorgado por D.^a Rosa Bustamante: viuda del Capitan de Milicia: Retirado, y Alfer. Real D. Antonio Jose Ortiz: Juez Ocep. y el Alcalde de 2.^a Eleccion D. Juan Esteban Pino. 9.^a de Julio 1814 a S

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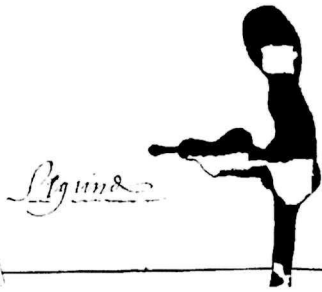


Fig. 22.2
Extracts from the will
of doña Rosa Bustamante,
1814. Ortiz Family Papers,
folder #3, NMSRCA.

Valga p.^{ra} el sello D.^o en el tomo 1814 y 1815. Juan Ortiz

En el Nombre de Dios todo Poderoso y de la siempre
Virgen Maria y de todos los Conos de los Angeles y Santos
de la Corte Celestial: Sepan todos que yo viere en mi
Testamento, que Yo D. Rosa Bustamante, hija de Legi-
timo matrimonio de D. Bernardo Bustamante y de
D.^a Feliciano Lano a la Vega: ya Difunta digo y
por Catolica Christiana y que creo firmemente en el
Misterio de la Santisima Trinidad Padre, Hijo y Espiri-
tu Santo, tres Personas distintas y un solo Dios Verdad-
ero: Creo que la Segunda Persona o la Verdadissima Tri-
nidad. se tuvo hombre en el vientre Virginal o
Maria Santisima quedando una Señora Virgen.
ama del Parto. en el Parto; y despues del Parto. creo
que muero Señor Sanctissimo Nostro Mente, y panem
por Salvar, y Redimir a nosotros Pecadores: que Nue-
tro al tercero dia. de entre los Muertos: que subio a los
Cielos; y ena sentado ala diestra de Dios Padre: Creo
que es auctor a los Santos Sacramentos; y que ena Rey
y Verdadero en el del Altar: y creo todos los demas
Misterios, que tiene, Cre: y Confiesa nuestra Santa
Madre, Iglesia, Apostolica, Romana, en
Ouya fei, y creencia quiero vivir. y morir confesando
una Verdad; y como Catolica Christiana Ordeno
en este mi Testamento. y ultima Voluntad, estan-

The following excerpts from her will reflect her faith:

1ª. . . Primeramente mando mi alma, a Dios A.S. que la Crio, y Redimio con el bator ynfinito u su precioso sangre; y mi Cuerpo ala Tierra de que fuey formado.

2ª. . . Declaro ser mi voluntad. que quando sea Dios ser-bido, Lleuame para Si, (como de su Piedad lo espero) y trasladarme de una vida mortal, a la eterna sea mi Cuerpo Amortafado con el Abito de mi Padre S.^o Fran.^{co} (u Cuya Orden hoy indignos Haceria) y lo pido por amor de Dios; encargo sea enterrada sin Cacon en la Capilla u S. I. Jose, y que mi entierro sea humilde, de Arance, con misa de Cuerpo presente, vigilia, Honras, y Cabo u otro, y tres nobenarias de misa. Pidas por mi alma

- 1a. I consign my soul to the Lord our God who created it, redeemed by His most precious blood and in my body to the earth from which it was formed. . . .
- 2a. I declare it to be my will that when God is served, taking me to Him (as I hope for in His Mercy) and from this mortal life to the eternal that my body be embalmed in the habit of St. Francis (I being of the third order) and I ask this for the love of God; I wish to be buried without a coffin and in the chapel of Most Holy Saint Joseph and that my burial be humble with gratuity, with Mass, vigils with funeral honors. Let there be anniversary Mass and Gregorian Masses for my soul. . . .

2ª. . . . Item un coche en su cochera con todo su atroz y con dos mulas de tiro: quiero q^e herba a su Magestad Senniemas quando salga por Viarios.

25. And also a buggy in the coach house with all its trappings and with two harness mules to pull it: I want the buggy to serve Our Lord when He is taken to be administered to the sick. . . .

4ª. . . . Item declaro haber pagado al Platero por la Echura de una Reliquia y dos Coronas u Plata 10p.

43. I also declare having paid the silversmith for making a repository for the relic and for two crowns of silver—10 pesos. . . .

5ª. . . . Item es mi voluntad que una Santa Cruz de Jerusalem con Indulgencias autenticas se coloque en nuestro Oratorio y lo mando se cumpla

55. It is also my will that the Holy Cross of Jerusalem with authentic indulgences be placed in our oratory: I order that this be carried out.

Each new liturgical year brought a rebirth of devotion and faith to those who lived along the trail of La Caravana. A deepening religious fervor was appropriate; the feast day of Mexico's special Lady, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, occurred at the beginning of Advent. There could be no more appropriate way to prepare for the coming of Christ than to honor His own mother; after all, she had appeared to one of New Spain's native sons, Juan Diego, and had become the patroness of this great province in which she chose to reveal herself. In every parish there were special observances—a vigil for the Blessed Mother, litanies, a high mass, and processions at churches where Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was patroness.

Further preparation for the coming of the Santo Niño occurred from December 16 through December 24 when *Las Posadas*, a folk drama, unfolded in song to represent the difficulties of Mary and Joseph as they sought lodging for the birth of the Christ Child. Every night for the nine nights of *Las Posadas* a candlelight procession made its way through the streets; the statues of Mary and Joseph were the central figures as the pilgrims moved from house to house, seeking a place for Mary to rest. This novena brought together simple drama, song, prayer, and an opportunity for socializing in a family or neighborhood setting. Various musical versions of *Las Posadas* exist. The following is an excerpt of one such version which was brought north by the early colonizers and is frequently sung in the Mesilla Valley. However, more melodic versions can be heard in neighborhoods from El Valle de Allende to Santa Fe.

Las Posadas

¿Quién les da posada	Who will give lodging
A estos peregrinos	To these pilgrims
Que vienen cansados	Who are tired
De andar los caminos?	From so much wandering?
¿Quién es quién la pide?	Who is it that asks for it?
Yo no la he de dar.	I shall not grant it.
¿Si serán ladrones	Might they be thieves
Que querrán robar?	That might want to steal?

Another Christmas drama, *Los Pastores*, was performed in communities along the trail. *Los Pastores*, an early Spanish miracle play, required careful staging but allowed for more spontaneity than *Las Posadas*. The drama is filled with the comedy of the liquor-imbibing Bartolo, who is being urged onto holier things by his fellow shepherds as they follow the star on Christmas night. *Los Pastores* contains strong elements of morality best illustrated by human frailties and diabolical temptations which are finally overcome when St. Michael defeats the devil in a verbal and physical encounter. The primary miracle in this Christmas drama is, of course, the birth of the Holy Child, but an attendant miracle occurs as Bartolo is suddenly transformed into a believer when he sees the Christ Child.

Los Pastores was often performed in church before midnight mass or in the church yard as it was performed in Spain in the centuries before the explorers and colonizers brought it to the New World. *Los Pastores*, as well as *Las Posadas*, were instruments for religious education, but the creative outlets generated in drama and song and the socializing effect in the community were equally important.

There are numerous versions of *Los Pastores*, all containing the same theme. Differences occur in the actors' speaking parts; the speaking parts were often handed down from one family member to another, and since the drama was generally unwritten, the opportunity for embellishment and improvisation added to the folk nature of the production.

Properly prepared through novenas, drama, and song, the "people of the trail" were now ready to receive the Holy Child at midnight mass, Misa de Gallo. Then, after mass, the family gathered to

break their fast, eating the foods typical of the locale. For the grand feast along the trail the food would have been similar: *buñuelos*, *posole*, *cajeta de membrillo*, *cabra*, *oveja*, *gallina*, *gallina de la tierra*.

But activities were not over. Epiphany was yet to come, and with it the drama of *Los Tres Reyes Magos*, the visit of the Three Wise Men, and, symbolically, the leaving of the gifts.

The people of the colonies moved through the liturgical year, carefully observing holy days of special significance—those of particular importance in the Spanish calendar and those that marked the feast of the parish church and other churches nearby. The *fiestas patronales* were particularly busy times for the mayordomos, who supervised the cleaning and refurbishing of the church, arranged for and directed the traditional processions, and organized the fiesta. The church was the catalyst in this traditional occasion for festivity, providing opportunities for music, food, drink, games, and socializing.

But there were forty days when the people of the trail were not festive. During Lent an aura of darkness prevailed as villagers again made atonement and prepared for Semana Santa and the tragedy of Christ's passing. The patronal feast day, if it occurred during Lent, was the only community festivity which was accepted during this period of darkness in the church calendar. Again there was preparation—the procession of palms, special foods for Lent, the procession of the Via Crucis, the procession of El Santo Entierro, and ultimately, the resurrection, when joy would return to the village. Since Holy Week was a time for prayer and not work, household chores were accomplished in advance to allow for meditation. Lenten dishes prepared for that period remain seasonal today—*capirotada*, *panocha*, *queso*, *torrejas*. The statues of Christ and of Nuestra Señora de Dolores were prepared for procession. Platforms on which they would be carried were constructed or refurbished, clothing was laundered or new garments made. The church was readied for transformation from its shroud of darkness to one that would reflect joy in the resurrection.

And, as though these manifestations of faith were not enough, there was the annual procession of Corpus Christi. On this day villagers erected their altars, covered them with freshly laundered linens, and decorated them with seasonal or paper flowers to receive the Blessed Sacrament when the procession paused at each altar for benediction. Mesilla, in southern New Mexico, still follows the tradition of placing bread in the shape of flowers along with grapes on the altars to symbolize the body and blood of Christ on this day of public affirmation of faith.

Central to the religious observances were the images depicting the Holy One being honored on the particular feast days. The religious objects, both bultos and retablos, were created in the colonies and in the art centers in and around Mexico City. The quality and quantity of religious paintings and sculpture reached unequalled heights during the eighteenth-century baroque and rococo periods. Important examples of these paintings—representing names like Cabrera and Torres—made their way into El Valle de Allende, Chihuahua, Paso del Norte, and Santa Fe on the Camino Real. But there were inadequate numbers for the many mission churches, capillas, and oratorios scattered up and down the valleys surrounding the trail of La Caravana. And besides, they were costly, and many of the communities could not afford them. So a folk art grew—the folk art of the santero, whose works embellished churches up and down the trail.



Fig. 22.3
Retablo of Santa Rita. Photo
Truman Matthews. Courtesy Museum
of New Mexico, neg #21287.

Today the work of the *santero* is recognized as the only indigenous Christian religious art in the United States, an extremely important artistic contribution of colonial New Mexico. But the *santos* in the days of the colonials and La Caravana were considered objects of the heart and spirit which inspired devotion for those they represented.

Visits to churches from El Valle de Allende to Santa Fe attest to the importance of the trail as a religious agent and as a carrier of religious goods; the ecclesiastical archives contain records of church inventories, the major portions of which were undoubtedly brought on La Caravana. Wills also enumerate such objects. Examples of art objects are found in the will of doña Rosa Bustamante of Santa Fe, whose testamento was previously cited. She states that the “large picture of San Francisco and San Antonio and any other statues of saints and other jewels that were definitely known to be given by my deceased husband [don Antonio José Ortiz], and by me, to the parish church and other churches of this city shall never be moved from their proper place. . . .”

Doña Rosa further notes that the “statues of San Francisco and San Antonio went up in price with everything and freight from Mexico to here [Santa Fe] was 140 pesos that must be subtracted from the last liquidation [of the estate].” Doña Rosa makes mention of her *oratorio* (household chapel) and its contents in her will: sacred vessels, *santos*, vestments “with their corresponding insignia,” *Nuestra Señora del Consuelo*, *El Señor de Esquíputas*, *El Alma de la Santísima Virgen*. Her will also lists seven *retablos*, subjects unnamed, and three landscape paintings. The mention of landscape paintings is of particular interest since there is a dearth of such paintings of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in New Mexico today.

The inventory of the estate of don Manuel Salustiano Delgado, a Santa Fe merchant who died in 1854, indicates that he carried religious goods, undoubtedly brought over the trail from El Valle de Allende and further south. Don Manuel Delgado’s inventory also gives clues to apparel worn by men of that period—embroidered and quilted vests, morning coats of blue and winter cloth, capes, shoes, boots, pants, shirts, beaver hats, Panama hats, caps, suspenders, silk ties, handkerchiefs, collars, chamois gloves, men’s hose, stockings, hickory shirts, Indiana shirts. In the same inventory are listed quantities of yard goods—gingham, linen, blue wool, red flannel, satin, challis, velveteen, hickory cloth, Indiana cloth—but no ready-made ladies’ apparel; the ladies obviously had their own dressmakers or made their own apparel, and probably some of their husbands’. Judging from the inventory, dress adornment could be impressive since embroidered trimming, silk laces, various widths of ribbon, numerous types of tape, metallic cord, fringe, and silk yarn are all listed. And there were all the necessities for sewing—hooks, eyes, needles, buttons of all descriptions (metal, shell, pearl, ivory), whalebone stays, spools of thread, clips and fasteners, skeins of thread. To further embellish the ladies’ attire, the merchant, according to the inventory, carried shawls of silk, wool, muslin; gloves of kidskin, thread, and silk; elbow length silk gloves and mittens of various descriptions; women’s stockings as differentiated from women’s fine stockings; ornamental combs



Fig. 22.4
Retablo of Christ entering Jerusalem.
Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, neg #48752.

Inventario
de todos los bienes del finado al
Manuel S. Delgado
concluido por los Administradores
Thomas Cabeza de Baca y Pablo Delgado
en Santa Fe el día 30 de Setbre 1854.
También el recibo de Doña
Maria de la Luz Baca, esposa del finado Delgado,
que consta la entrega de la herencia por los
Administradores y que en de ella tanto por
la herencia que trajo al patrimonio y que
le corresponden a sus finados padres.

Fig. 22.5

Extracts from the inventory of estate of Manuel S. Delgado, 1854. Delgado Papers, Dingee Collection, folder #2, NMSRCA.

and hair adornments; rebozos of various colors and materials, both fine and inexpensive; shoes and white satin slippers. Don Manuel Delgado is known to have shipped goods from Chihuahua for his commercial enterprises in the Santa Fe area; certainly some of the goods mentioned were freighted in from the south. However, since don Manuel's son-in-law, Miguel Romero y Baca, had developed a flourishing freight line from Santa Fe to St. Louis and Kansas City by 1854, some of these articles came from trade with the United States.

Another indicator of dress during the mid eighteenth century comes from correspondence which came into the possession of don Francisco S. Delgado. The correspondence is dated 1766 from Durango and pertains to the settlement of the estate of don Manuel's grandfather, Antonio Delgado. An inventory lists items which appear to have been in don Antonio's possession at the time of his death. Among other things were listed a pair of buckles and a "chamois doublet and well worn breeches." Another listing includes "a velvet military tunic with black velvet trousers and a tunic of blue lustrous material." "Also two used chambray night shirts and two new chambray nightcaps."

Education during the early days of the trail was by tutor and was generally limited to those of means. Parish priests often provided rudimentary education to small numbers of boys who showed promise; certain boys who appeared to have potential as scholars and were endowed with piety were

Inventario

del
Dinero efectivo \$ 243 10

Efectos carros varios etc.		
21 p. Musolina #6 gr. a 15c		6.90
46 gr. de patatas	12	5.75
35 " de Carandian	30	9.90
32 " Indianinhuere, Cortinas	25	8.00
23 " do C do Cortes	15	3.45
332 " Gara de de dylino	09	19.75
2 Cortes Chali	3 00	6.00
52 grs Limon	20	10.40
48 " Regia	25	12.00
62 " do fino	28	17.36
10 " Punto bordado	20	2.00
7 1/2 " Pano azul	1.50	11.25
4 1/2 " Bagita Colorado	3 1/2	1.40
4 " Caeente fino	75	3.00
36 " Maon	14	5.04
7 " Pato negro	2.00	14.00
3 " Pana color de rosa	3 1/2	1.12
1 Corta de Pato de color		22.50
9 grs Lino Runco	35	3.15
24 1/2 " Sangalote	10 1/2	24.10
21 " Grs Oplomado	75	15.25
826 1/2 " Lienzo fino D. H.	15	123.97
467 " do do	13	64.61
950 1/2 " do #12	13	123.56
16 " Merino	37 1/2	0.00
309 1/2 " Lienzo corriente	10	30.90

Fig. 22.5 (continued)

Extracts from the inventory of estate of Manuel S. Delgado, 1854.

6.^a de la vuelta \$ 211.25.
 Un rancho, situado en el
 Partido de Santa Fe, en el
 paraje llamado Los Salacios 29.75
 7.^a Una casa situada en la
 parte de San de la Ciudad
 de Santa Fe, que era antes
 de Lafayette Heas. 200.00
 \$ 440.00

Recapitulacion

I Dinero efectivo	\$ 243.10
II Efectos, carros y puros	3469.90.
III Animales	2517.00
IV Deudas cobrables y incobrables	1309.45.
V Cerenos y Casas.	441.00

Suma Total \$ 7,980.45.

Siete mil novecientos ochenta y cinco pesos.
 Nosotras las abajo firmantes Admisos
 Tratores Certificamos que el Inven-
 tario de arrenda es un Inventario
 verdadero de todos los bienes del
 finado Manuel S. Delgado hecho
 por nosotros despues de haber pri-
 mariamente causado el pago de todos
 las deudas del finado y despues de
 haber entregado la hipoteca que cor-
 respondia a la venta del dicho
 finado Manuel S. Delgado.

Santa Fe N. M. a Trece de 1854.
 Juan C. de la Cruz Pablo Delgado

Fig. 22.5 (continued)

Extracts from the inventory of estate of Manuel S. Delgado, 1854.

marked for the priesthood and sent to Durango for training. Some families in New Mexico sent their sons to Durango for schooling; for example, on reaching the age of sixteen four of the five sons of don Felipe Delgado of Santa Fe were sent to school in Durango, while the youngest attended school in St. Louis. The opening of the trail eastward to Missouri provided an educational option for those New Mexico families who could afford it.

The movement of colonists, merchants, the military, students, priests, and families provided the means for continuous folk exchanges—in song, in *cuentos* and *dichos*, in art. Thus we find similar folk music from El Valle de Allende to Santa Fe. The songs range from “No Me Mires,” a portion of which was quoted above, recording the sadness brought about by an arranged marriage, to “Paso del Norte,” a song in which the singer laments a move from home and loved ones.

“*Paso del Norte*”

Paso del Norte que lejos te vas quedando	Paso del Norte how far behind you remain
Puerto lúcido de ti me voy aucentando	Of you, gay port, I am going to depart
Allá mis padres de mi se están acordando	There my parents will be thinking of me
Solo Dios sabe si a verlos yo volveré	And God only knows if I shall ever see them again

Or, a song of contended love:

“*La Noche Está Serena*”

La noche está serena	The night is serene
Todo en silencio está	Everything is silent
Solo la luna pálida	Except the pale moon
Es la que alumbra ya	That is illuming us

Loved ones were honored in many special ways, but the most endearing gesture of all was in song and on one’s saint’s day.

“*El Día de Tu Santo*”

Dios bendiga este día venturoso	God bless this happy day
Y bendiga la prenda que adoro	And bless the loved one that I adore
Y los angeles cantan en coro	And may the angels sing in chorus
Por los años que cumples mi bien	for the years that you have attained, my dear

The *corridos* are known up and down the trail. Any special heroic occurrence would generate a ballad. An example of the narrative poem, probably first created around a campfire in some small village in the middle to late nineteenth century, is the “Corrido del Indio Victorio.”

“*Corrido del Indio Victorio*”

Dos años antes de ochenta	Two years come eighty
Este Indio se pronunció	This Indian rebelled
Varias víctimas dejó	Several victims he left
Y también viudas llorando	And also widows weeping

Those were the songs, the traditions observed, and the elements of faith practiced by the people along the trail. Those people—our people—who lived in relative isolation within New Spain’s most isolated province left a heritage of folk ways—music, literature, religious traditions, art of simple beauty—which unite us today as people with backgrounds of deep, rich, and meaningful faith. ♣

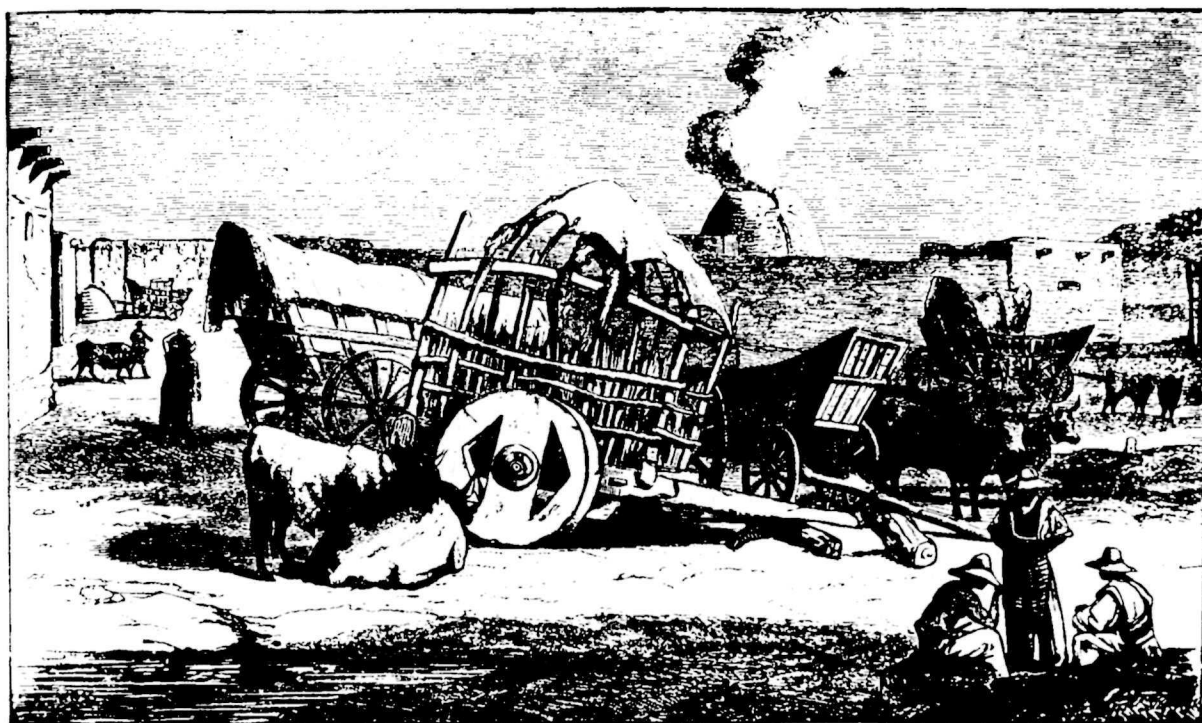


Fig. 22.6

Conestogas and New Mexican carretas parked at a village.

From Great Grandmother's Girls in New Mexico, Elizabeth W. Champney, Boston: 1888.

The author is grateful for information and insights obtained from interviews and conversations with Fabiola C. de Baca Gilbert, Teresa García de Fountain, and Margarita Romero de Taylor. Other sources include the Delgado Papers (in the Dingee Collection) and the Ortiz family papers, both in the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe; Archives of the Archdiocese of Durango; and recordings from the Federal Music Project in New Mexico, Works Progress Administration (WPA), ca. 1937.

El Camino Real International Heritage Center

History and Future of a Unique Partnership

Stephen L. Fosberg



HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CAMINO REAL

NOT LONG AFTER CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS'S ARRIVAL in the New World, the Spaniards extended their conquests to include the Empire of Mexico. From its capital, Tenochtitlán/Mexico City, they explored unknown lands and, with the discovery of each new rich silver lode, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was extended further northward.

Although parts of El Camino Real had been used by sixteenth-century Spanish adventurers and even earlier by Native Americans, the entire length of the route was blazed in 1598 when Don Juan de Oñate led a group of Spanish settlers into present-day New Mexico and, near the Indian pueblo of San Juan, established the first formal European municipality west of the Mississippi.

For more than 300 years, under both the Spanish and Mexican rule, the route continued to serve as a lifeline. Modest local New Mexico products—piñon nuts, deerskins, rough woven cloth—were shipped southward to Mexican markets, while northward came caravans laden with a wide variety of necessities and luxuries which sustained and gave meaning to the Spanish colonial frontier lifestyle. The trail continued to play a significant role under independent Mexico (1821–1846), when its northern section became known as the Chihuahua Trail, and later as part of the Territory of New Mexico (1847–1912) under United States rule.

The history of the Camino Real—one of the longest historic roads in continental North America—reveals a complex pattern of conquest and colonization, movement and settlement, exchange and distribution of goods, and encounters between different ethnic groups, languages, customs, and philosophies. It throws light on the history of transportation, the introduction of livestock and agricultural products, and the coming of new religious ideals and secular customs.

With the arrival of the railroad in the 1880s and later the beginning of the modern highway system, the historic Camino Real fell into disuse and its significance was forgotten.

El Camino Real International Heritage Center will provide an unparalleled opportunity to return the history of this great trade and exploration route to the public's attention. It is an invaluable

cultural resource; its history is central to the understanding of the history of the New Mexico and the American Southwest and of their historic connection to Spain and Mexico. Such an understanding will contribute vitally to an appreciation of the vitality of our nation's cultural pluralism.

Recently, international organizations such as the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) have focused world attention on historic trails and roads as cultural corridors. No better example of the central role roads play as transmitters of culture, commerce, and communications can be found than the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Along the Camino Real, ideas, ideology, technology, flora, fauna, and diseases were transmitted. For more than 300 years, this road served as the principal trade, transportation, and communications link between Spain, Mexico, and the remote interior provinces. Throughout its long history, El Camino Real served always as an agent of change.

Perhaps, it is still acting in this capacity. Numerous public agencies and private groups are now cooperating in an unprecedented manner to research, document, protect, and interpret this resource of international significance. Precisely because the 1,500-mile trail crosses two countries (400 in the U.S. and 1,100 in Mexico) and traverses federal, state, private, and Indian reservation lands, we are learning to coordinate our cultural resource management programs with a much wider group of partners than ever before. We are changing how we think about linear resources, single-agency visitor centers, heritage tourism, and a host of other issues as we work in new cooperative relations. Once again, the Camino Real is serving to integrate and unite peoples on both sides of the Rio Grande.

This essay will explain why the State Monuments Division of the Museum of New Mexico and the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior have joined forces on this unique initiative. The current status of the architectural design of the Camino Real International Heritage Center and landscape plans will be clarified. The roles various partners will play in the operation of the center will be touched on. Finally, because this cooperative venture stands as a model for international partnerships, some of the reasons why this project has garnered the support of local communities as well as state and national governments will be explored.

HISTORY AND CURRENT STATUS OF PARTNERSHIP

The Camino Real Planning Study

The State of New Mexico became interested in El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro almost by happenstance. Rob Baca, then assistant director of State Monuments, attended a discussion of the subject sponsored by the New Mexico Department of Tourism in Socorro in 1990. The discussion featured Dr. Gabrielle Palmer and some of the research she had done on El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. This led to a consideration of whether it might be possible to commemorate the Camino Real through the establishment of a new state monument. If a new monument was created, where would it be located? The Camino Real was such a massive resource to deal with that the idea was almost overwhelming.

After discussions of the proposal with the directors of the State Monuments Division (NMSM) and the Museum of New Mexico, funding was sought from the state legislature for a feasibility study. Because strong grassroots support for this project was essential, the aid of the citizens of the Rio Abajo was enlisted by establishing an advisory committee. Two or three individuals each were selected from the communities of Los Lunas, Belen, Socorro, Truth or Consequences, and Las Cruces. Part of the decision to create the new state monument in the southern part of the state was based on economic development concerns. The northern part of the state, with Albuquerque and Santa Fe, already captures a fair share of the tourism that comes into New Mexico. The southern part of the state has a rich cultural and historic legacy, but their story was not being told.

The first request to the New Mexico Legislature in 1991 resulted in the passage of Senate Joint Memorial 25, sponsored by Senator James Martin from Socorro. The memorial authorized the NMSM to pursue the study of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, for possible designation as a New Mexico State Monument.

In 1992, the New Mexico State Legislature appropriated \$40,000 towards a feasibility study. The appropriation was far short of what was originally requested and not enough to complete a thorough feasibility study. Members of the advisory committee were asked if they thought it might be appropriate to request that each of the communities along the Rio Abajo contribute funding towards the study. Presentations were made to each of the city councils, and aid in funding the feasibility study was requested. The team (Gabrielle Palmer, director of a nonprofit research organization titled El Camino Real Project, Inc.; Tisa Gabrielle, legislative liaison for the Office of Cultural Affairs; and Robert Baca, assistant director of NMSM) was successful, and the communities contributed \$24,000 towards the study. In November of 1992, the NMSM contracted with Architectural Research Consultants of Albuquerque to prepare a planning study for the project.

Pursuant to the planning study, state officials, Dr. Palmer, and the citizens advisory committee met to decide what direction the project should take. Two vision workshops were held in Socorro, the first on January 16 and the second on May 22, 1993. The meetings focused on the following elements:

- Facility Program
- Conceptual Facility and Site Design
- Site Location
- Local Economic Impact Analysis
- Estimate of Capital and Operating Costs

The vision workshops made recommendations for site location and programming. It was decided that the site should be located in a pristine environment devoid of any modern intrusions. This would aid in the interpretation of the experience of the Camino Real for the visiting public. The location selected falls midway between Socorro and Truth or Consequences, and midway between Albuquerque and Las Cruces/El Paso.

The Heritage Center will be located on an impressive mesa point overlooking the broad Rio Grande Valley. The location is three miles east of the rest stop just south of exit 115 on Interstate 25. Adjacent to dramatic Sheep Canyon, it overlooks the Camino Real two miles to the east on the opposite bank of the Rio Grande. The site offers a 360° panorama of undeveloped landscapes seemingly unchanged in appearance since the time of Oñate. The complete siting analysis, including the economic benefits of constructing and operating the center in its proposed location, is reported in the 1994 planning study titled *El Viaje* (Architectural Research Consultants 1994).

The Boots and Saddles System

Within New Mexico in the nineteenth century, a system of more than 60 military installations was established. These forts, supply depots, and minor outposts all served to integrate the new territory into the expanding United States. Integration proceeded as trade routes expanded to both coasts, transportation networks improved, and communications links became established. Troops at the forts engaged in innumerable battles with Indian tribes fighting the loss of their homelands and traditional lifestyles. Nearly all the forts were situated to protect travel along well-established transportation routes: Fort Union was built on the Santa Fe Trail, Fort Cummings on the Butterfield Trail, and Forts Selden and Craig were built along the Camino Real. Soldiers guided and protected travelers and traders and utilized the trails for their own supply and communications.

The BLM originally became involved with the Camino Real because of its mandate to manage

military forts located on BLM lands along the historic road's trace. At the exact same time that the Camino Real Project and Heritage Center Study were underway, the BLM undertook a similar study of historic military forts and ways of improving their management and interpretation. As specified in the 1992 Department of the Interior Appropriations Act:

The . . . Bureau [is directed] to prepare a study of seven military forts (Forts Craig, Cummings, Stanton, Selden, Sumner, Union, and Bayard) in New Mexico to develop alternatives for interpreting and preserving the forts encompassing common themes, including the feasibility of establishing tour routes for vehicles and horse-mounted visitors, to be submitted to the Congress within one year after enactment of this bill.

Two of these forts, Selden and Sumner, are under the administration of the State Monuments Division. Fort Union is managed by the National Park Service. The BLM is in charge of Forts Craig and Selden. Forts Stanton and Bayard are managed by the New Mexico Department of Health since at one time both were used as hospitals. Representatives of these management agencies formed an interagency study team consisting of the BLM, the National Park Service, New Mexico State Monuments, and the New Mexico Department of Health.

At the time the interagency draft final report was being prepared for transmittal to Congress, the BLM became aware of the fact that NMSM would be recommending construction of a major new interpretive center somewhere near Fort Craig in central New Mexico. Since the draft report was also going to recommend that a new interpretive center serve as a focal point for military forts interpretive programs, BLM State Archeologist Stephen Fosberg approached Rob Baca, then assistant director of State Monuments, in the summer of 1993 to see if the state agency would be interested in combining forces and working together to build and staff a single heritage center that could interpret both the Camino Real and the military forts. Integration of these two program initiatives made sense because they naturally shared certain common interpretive themes:

- conflicts and interactions with Indian tribes
- assimilation and cultural conflict
- the economy of the New Mexican territory and its economic ties to Mexico
- the effect the forts had on the settlements and economic systems surrounding them

Both agencies have been working together ever since. Both want to see the Heritage Center succeed as an integrating force for economic development, heritage tourism, heritage education, and recreation attractions for the southern Rio Grande corridor.

*CURRENT STATUS: THE CAMINO REAL INTERNATIONAL HERITAGE CENTER *Interpretive Plan*

An interpretive plan which identifies the themes, subject matter, and available graphics and artifacts has been prepared by Dr. Gabrielle Palmer. The interpretation likely will follow a chronological approach. The following thematic areas have been proposed:

1350–1535	Prehistory
1535–1598	Spanish Entradas and Conquest
1610–1680	Church and state relations in the seventeenth century
1680–1692	Pueblo Revolt and Reconquest
1692–1821	Mining, urban development, the hacienda, livestock and agriculture on the trail
1821–1848	Mexican Independence and the Santa Fe Trail
1854–1885	Camino Real and military history; the Apache
1880s	the railroad

Maps, artifacts, and artwork are available to illustrate and interpret each of these thematic areas. However, final decisions on the style, content, and fabrication of the exhibit program have not yet been made. This program is fluid and is evolving as the building design progresses and the needs of the architecture are accommodated.

The exhibit is being designed by Craig Kerger of Formations, Inc., of Portland, Oregon. Formations has extensive experience in designing exhibits for history museums. For example, they created the exhibits for Warm Springs, Wasco, and Paiute tribal museums; the Forest Learning Center at Mount St. Helens; and the Pacific Northwest Museum of Natural History.

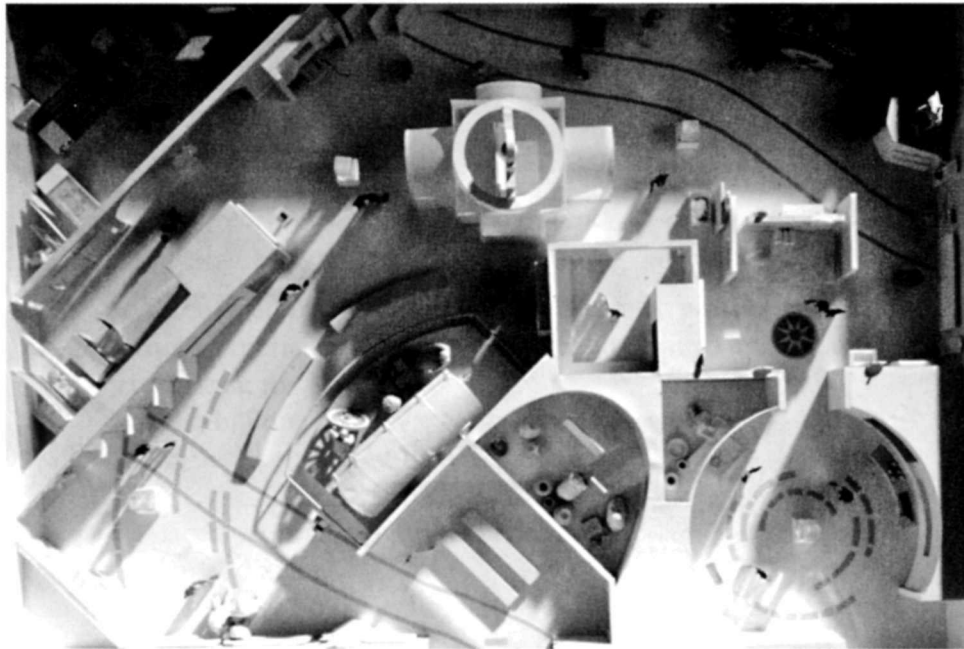


Fig. 23.1
Model of
interpretive area.
Courtesy of Dekker,
Perich, Sabatini
Architects

Architecture and Engineering Contract

In 1995, the New Mexico BLM granted NMSM \$100,000 to be used in planning the new International Heritage Center. These funds were matched with an ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancement Act) grant for \$400,000. The total appropriation of \$500,000 will be used for the completion of:

1. Architectural and engineering plans through construction documents
2. Exhibit design plans and cost estimates through schematic design documents
3. A Historic Corridor Management Plan for the Rio Abajo communities

The architectural firm of Holm Sabatini from Albuquerque has teamed up with Formations, Architectural Research Consultants, and two architects from Mexico City, Mario Schjetnan and Enrique Norten. The inclusion of the last two provides an international perspective to the planning of the new Heritage Center.

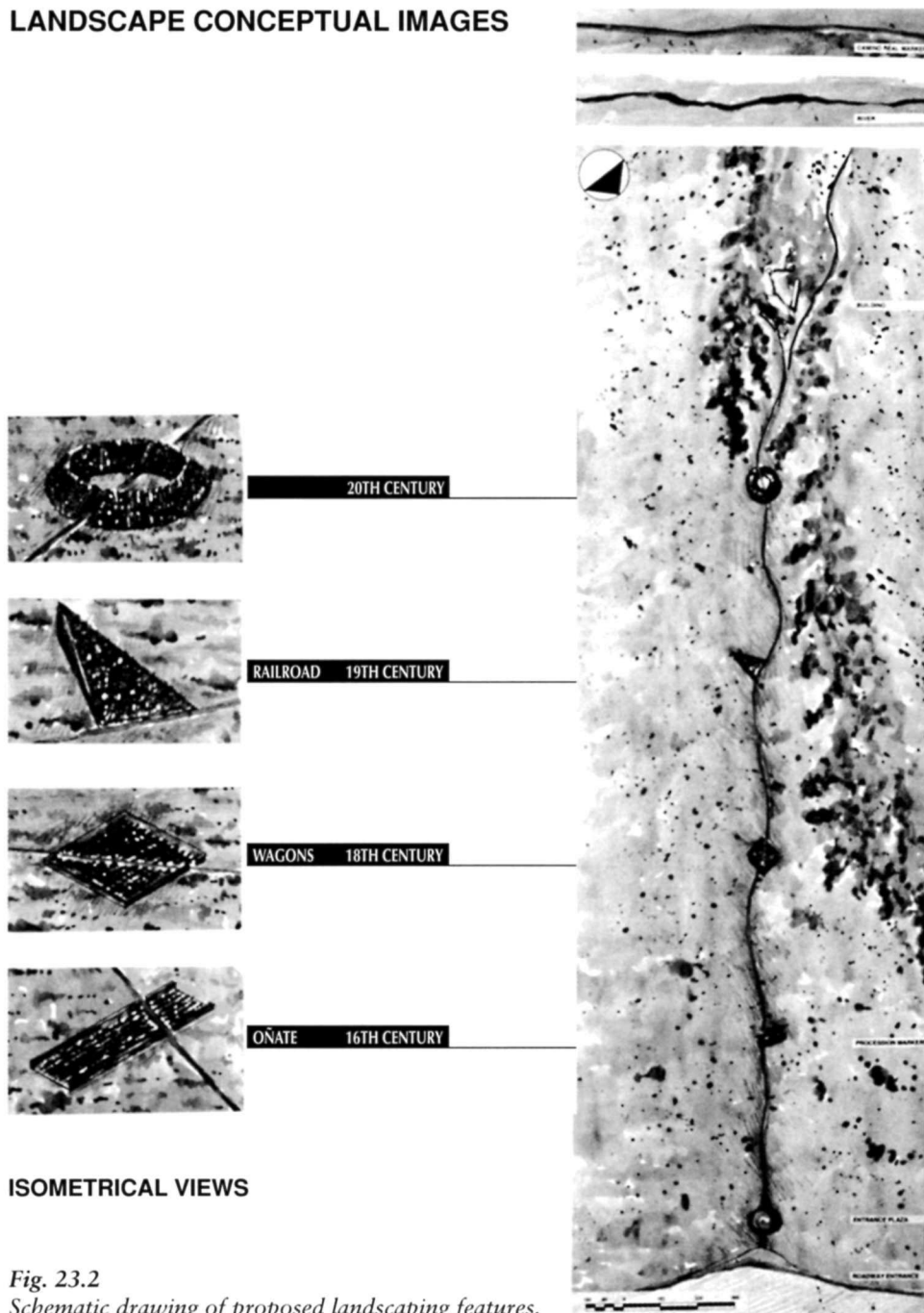
Landscaping

Mario Schjetnan from the Grupo de Deseno of Mexico City provided input on preliminary landscape designs. His proposals include a series of rock walls and desert plants at the interstate highway exit to screen an existing diner facility. Monumental sculpture may also be introduced to attract the attention of highway traffic and to screen man-made intrusions. The intent is to encourage visitors to travel down the three-mile entrance road through the use of a series of landscape interventions. These will surprise the visitors and encourage them to continue until they arrive at the museum.

As the visitors enter the entrance road, lines or groupings of certain plants will direct the eye to particular landscape features. Tourists will traverse a series of featured elements such as special gardens and landscaped areas, each in a basic geometric pattern: a circle, a square, and a triangle.

The first will be a large circular depression built of stone. It may serve as a cistern for watering the desert shrubs. Travelers will then cross a square of sotoles and a triangle of silver plants that may be reminiscent of Camino Real traffic related to silver mines. Finally, after breasting a berm of ocotillos, one can see the museum. In this manner, a dramatic entrance is achieved.

LANDSCAPE CONCEPTUAL IMAGES



ISOMETRICAL VIEWS

Fig. 23.2
Schematic drawing of proposed landscaping features.
Courtesy Dekker, Perich, Sabatini Architects.

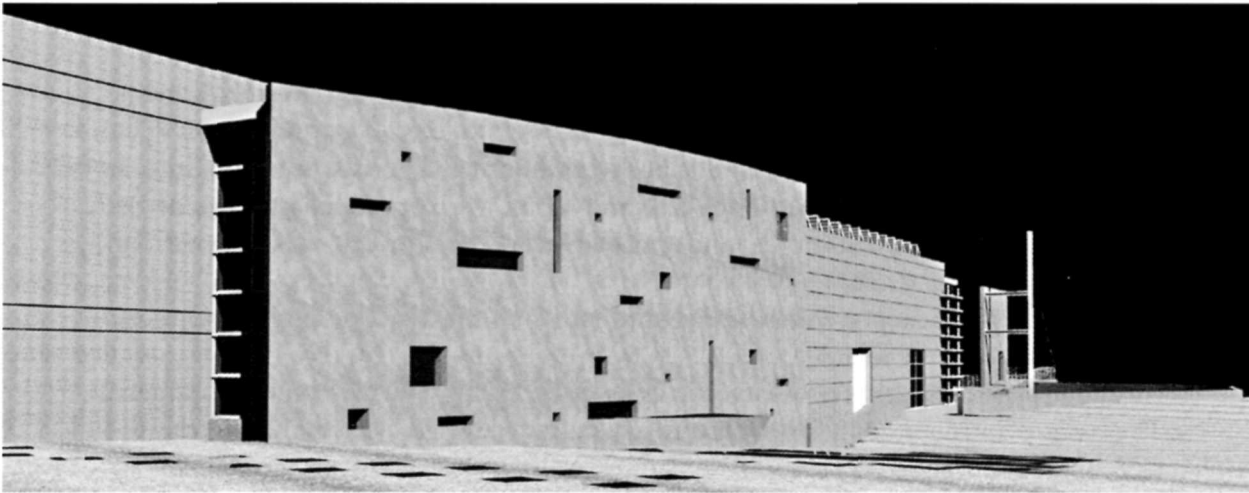


Fig. 23.3

Architectural rendering of interpretive center. Courtesy Dekker, Perich, Sabatini Architects.

Architecture

Having traversed through a series of geometric landscaped footprints, visitors then observe a structure that is consistent with those experiences. Here, we are dealing primarily with the line. On a general level, Bill Sabatini is attempting to:

- Integrate site features into the building and vice versa. The landscape and vistas are dramatic, and the pedestrian traffic should be able to move easily between inside and outside interpretive features.
- Provide a good variety of spaces. A broad range of experiences for adults and children. For ambulatory and handicapped alike.
- Offer a design that is clear, simple, bold, and timeless. It should make a dramatic architectural statement without sacrificing human scale or a vernacular feel.
- Create a building design that is flexible and can easily be expanded to accommodate phased construction.
- “Plug-in” program spaces so that each space can be sized optimally for its intended use. For example, the exhibit designer’s specific needs can dictate the form and placement of this space without affecting the specific needs of spaces serving other functions.
- Symbolically, create a building that can be seen as a sentry, observing El Camino Real through time.

These goals are manifested in the architectural design. The predominant feature is a strong linear element or spine to which everything is connected.

1. This line or trail connects points along its path and symbolizes the progression of time, journey, and movement.
2. Building spaces have been programmed as points along the line, and these forms can abstractly represent a series of events along the trail.
3. The linear nature of the spine adds a sense of dramatic scale to an otherwise small first-phase building. It provides a sense of the overall, fully phased scale of the center during all phases of construction.
4. The spine can be used as a timeline to organize storytelling elements along it, both on interior and exterior surfaces.
5. Elements added in the future could extend the idea of the line further out into the

landscape. Towers, sculptures, bridges, or walkways might reinforce the sense of journey and focus on the view of the actual Camino Real.

6. It incorporates a bridge concept, again symbolic of the bridging of two worlds by the Camino Real.
7. The addition of a tower would provide both lighthouse and periscope capabilities. It will be visible from a distance both day and night, with spectacular views of the Camino Real, the Rio Grande, and various nearby historical sites (Paraje San Francisco and Fort Craig).
8. A natural arroyo headcut will be utilized for an amphitheater for exterior gathering, presentation, and the like.
9. An unobtrusive caretaker's residence provides security, along with the front wall and gate.
10. The terrace and lookout station provide dramatic views across the river to the Fra Cristobal mountains.
11. From the terrace, visitors can approach the foot trail, featuring outside exhibits and view points.

The architectural model is still evolving. The challenge is to design a building that will be an attraction in its own right while still respecting the vast pristine landforms traversed by the Camino.

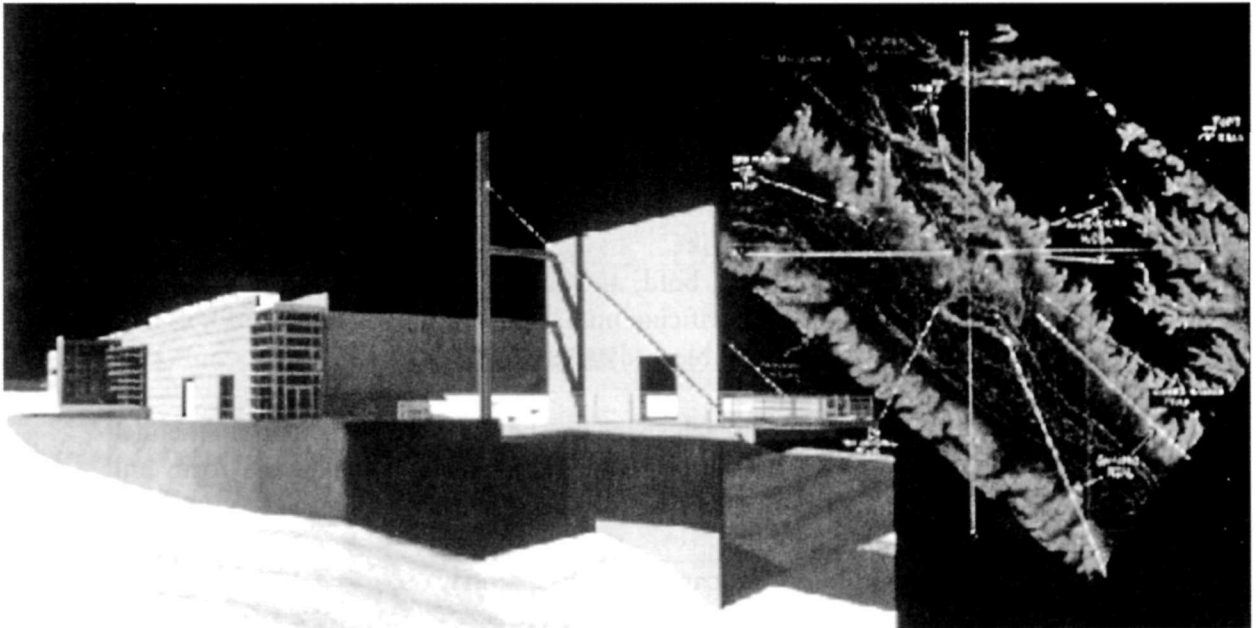


Fig. 23.4

Architectural rendering of interpretive center. Courtesy Dekker, Perich, Sabatini Architects

Construction Funding

Cost projections established by the 1994 planning study anticipated that approximately \$7,325,000 would be needed for architecture and engineering design, and construction of the building, infrastructure, and exhibits. The BLM has pledged \$2,500,000 towards this effort. Both the current executive and legislative leaders in New Mexico have pledged to work with us to provide the remaining funds need to complete the facility.

This project has emerged as the top funding priority for the BLM construction accounts nationwide. The project enjoys bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress and the Clinton administration. The interagency and international partnerships involved in this project are seen as a template for future BLM interpretive centers.

Land Use Planning and Land Transfer

In a Letter of Intent from the New Mexico BLM State Director to the New Mexico Cultural Affairs Officer, the BLM agreed to transfer public lands to the State of New Mexico for the heritage center and related facilities. Actual transfer of title to the land will take place after sufficient funding has been obtained to initiate construction. The BLM can provide these lands to the state free of charge under provisions of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act because they will be used for recreation.

Approximately 80 acres will likely be turned over to the state. Within this area, the heritage center, parking lots, caretaker facilities, and short interpretive trails will be constructed. Related attractions such as camping facilities and long-distance trails to nearby archaeological and historical sites will be located on BLM, private, and other state lands. Easements and cooperative agreements to allow access and joint management of facilities will need to be completed.

Withdrawal of 80 acres from the local grazing permittee will have a negligible effect on grazing operations. In fact, it should only reduce the allotment of cattle by one head. Still, the BLM will hold a number of public hearings so that local public land users are assured that the construction and operation of this facility will not disrupt their traditional lifestyles and uses of surrounding public lands.

ROLES OF COOPERATING PARTNERS

State Monuments

Initial planning to determine how the BLM and the NMSM will jointly staff the center is underway. Considering the proximity of Fort Craig, it is hoped that public programming for the International Heritage Center and the military forts program can be coordinated. As a matter of fact, the project team is planning to connect Fort Craig to the Heritage Center with a hiking trail. The distance is approximately five miles as the crow flies. The concept of creating a network of outdoor interpretive exhibits to be installed along the trail has received a strong endorsement from the citizens' advisory committee.

Bureau of Land Management

Current plans for the heritage center include administrative space for two permanent BLM staff. These positions would likely be filled by interpreters or cultural heritage specialists. By the end of 1999, the BLM and NMSM will have completed an agreement document to clarify personnel and operational issues. Given the possibility of temporary staff from Mexico or Spain working out of the facility, work assignments, performance evaluations, and day-to-day operational details and logistical decisions will have to be handled creatively.

The BLM's original intent in supporting the international heritage center was to promote the interpretation and visitation of the seven historic military forts mentioned in their report to Congress. Fort Craig, located only 10 miles north of the heritage center, is the second largest fort in New Mexico. It was also the location of a Civil War battle in 1862, and the BLM has been improving the historic site's infrastructure for several years, anticipating an increase in visitation. Permanent interpretive trails with signs and kiosks, a parking lot, a multiyear archaeological field school, picnic tables, rest rooms, a small visitor center, and electric generating capacity will all have been completed by the time the Camino Real International Heritage Center opens.

The State of New Mexico will assume all maintenance costs for the facility, but because the BLM will help staff the facility, the BLM will provide a proportionate share of operating funds. The BLM looks forward to sponsoring development of traveling exhibits on themes of interest to management as well as to the average visitor. Topics such as changes in ecosystems, the effects of introduced flora

and fauna, regional recreational attractions, and opportunities for public involvement in site protection and research may be addressed.

National Park Service

In 1993, Congress passed legislation requiring the National Park Service to evaluate the feasibility and desirability of designating El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro as a national trail. Four years of study by NPS planners and historians culminated in the National Historic Trail feasibility study (National Park Service 1997; also see Chapter 24, this volume), which found that the trail does meet the criteria for listing as a National Historic Trail. On May 2, 1998, Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) announced plans to introduce the legislation to formally designate El Camino Real as a national historic trail. This legislation enjoys bipartisan support within the New Mexico congressional delegation. Following designation by Congress, a national historic management plan will be prepared to address trail preservation and public use and appreciation of the trail and its associated values.

Mexico and Spain

One of the more exciting aspects of this project is the role that Mexico and Spain may play in the programming and operations of the center. We have established an ongoing working relationship with Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). Along with INAH the BLM, NPS, and NMSM have sponsored a series of professional conferences whose aim has been to revive and coordinate research on the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. INAH has expressed an interest in providing input on the development of the center's interpretive plans. We will be discussing with our Mexican colleagues joint development of traveling exhibits on the Camino Real that could be used here and in history museums in Chihuahua and Durango.

The NMSM director and assistant director and Dr. Gabrielle Palmer have all traveled to Spain to discuss with government ministries and museum officials Spanish support for this project. The Spanish chapter of the International Council on Monuments and Sites is considering providing staff support for completion of a corridor management plan for the trail. Various museums in Spain may provide artifacts for display, and government support for landscaping, sculptures, or video production have also been proposed.

Local Communities

Some of the most important partners in the project have been the communities of the Rio Abajo. Representatives from the communities were involved in this project at a very early stage. Because of their involvement in the feasibility study, "Cultural Camino Real Satellites" are being developed by individual communities in the region. One idea that has received a great deal of support is the development of programs in each community related to different eras of the Camino Real. The ideas and their implementation would come from each community, and they are likely to be different and distinct, ranging from festivals celebrating the history of the Camino Real to establishing a visitors' center to developing curriculum for local schools on the historic road. The community of Belen has established a Camino Real Visitor Center. Los Lunas received funding from the state legislature to build a new Visitor's and Convention Bureau that will emphasize the history of the Camino Real through literature and exhibits. Part of the staffing request for the International Heritage Center will be an outreach/educator staff member who will work with the communities to develop educational programming and coordinate events. The historic highway has been marked in New Mexico and Mexico with interpretive highway signs that inform travelers about some of the important places along the Camino Real. One further step would be the development of an audio tape pointing out

various interesting sites along the Camino Real. The success of the International Heritage Center depends on the level of communication and interaction with all of the associated communities. Like the hub of a wheel, the International Heritage Center will support and be supported by each of its spokes (communities).

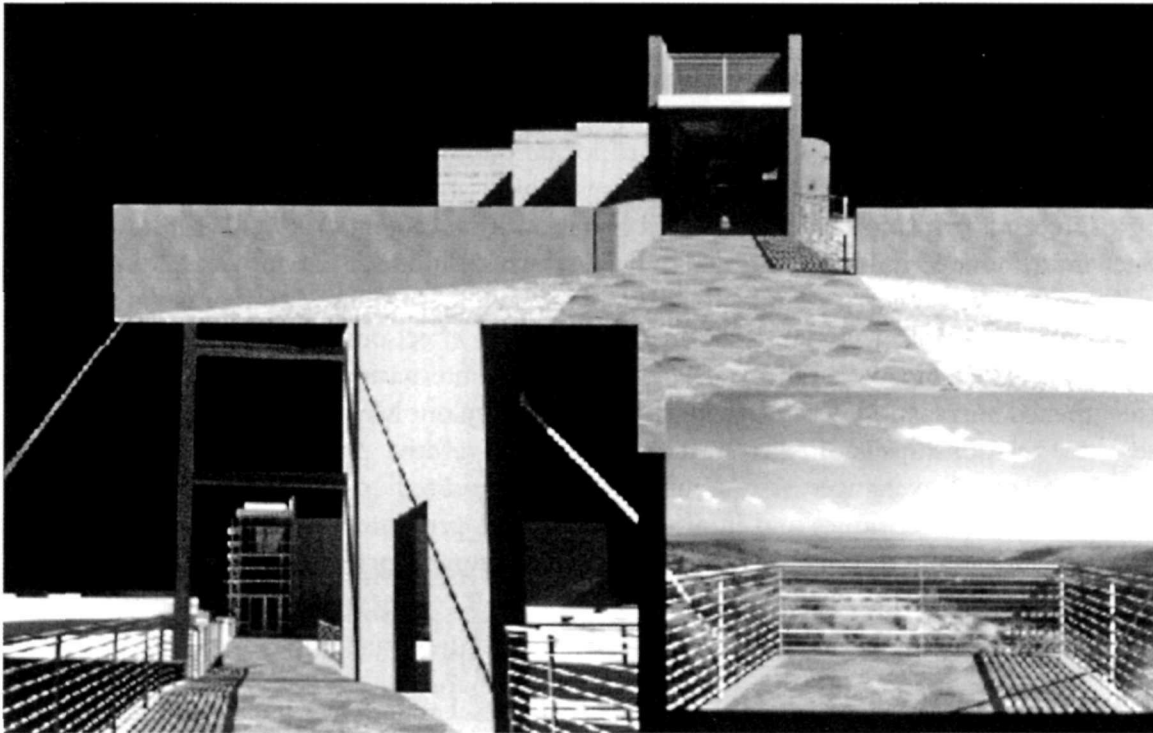


Fig. 23.5

*Collage of renderings of interpretive center, including a view to the east off the back balcony of the building.
Courtesy Dekker, Perich, Sabatini Architects.*

A MODEL FOR COOPERATION CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This project can serve as a model for interagency partnerships. Several lessons can be learned from this initiative.

First, broad-based partnerships stand the greatest chance of success. In the case of the Camino Real, the federal agencies and the state government joined forces with their Mexican counterparts to share resources and expertise. The Spanish government and private Spanish museums may lend artifacts, funding, and technical expertise as well. International partners add status to a project and help insure that interpretive and outreach programs benefit from multicultural perspectives.

Second, the importance of local support for heritage tourism projects cannot be over-emphasized. Several years back, a proposal before the U.S. Congress to develop official auto touring loops between archaeological sites in northern New Mexico was withdrawn because local Hispanic and Indian communities objected to the proposal, saying it was a threat to their traditional lifestyles and ways of life. In contrast, from its inception, the Camino Real project has benefited from local citizens' advisory groups that provided input on the location and role of the Heritage Center as well as interactions with local community events and attractions. The Heritage Center will serve as a clearinghouse that will direct visitors to related area attractions only when local officials express an interest in increasing visitation to local sites and communities.

Third, both the BLM and NMSM have worked hard to create a single Heritage Center rather than each agency pursuing limited public funding for two interpretive centers with a related focus. The Camino Real Project is succeeding because it tells a unique and overlooked story. Despite its profound impact on the history of northern Mexico and the American Southwest, there simply is no other venue that tells the compelling story of this 1,500-mile link between two worlds. While there are many tourist attractions in the developed urban centers of northern New Mexico, the Rio Abajo has been overlooked by state tourism officials. There are no competing, redundant facilities.

Fourth, scarce heritage tourism dollars are being invested in areas where the economic benefits will be felt most profoundly. The decision to locate the Heritage Center in Socorro County was partially influenced by the fact that this region lags behind the rest of the state in terms of employment and gross receipts from retail trade. Projected visitation at the center is 106,000 visitors annually. This will generate about 10 million additional dollars, which should translate into an additional 175 new jobs. Tax receipts in Socorro County alone could increase as much as 29%. For isolated rural areas, even modest tourism projects can result in a very positive effect on local economies.

Finally, partnerships take time to develop, especially international ones. We believe this project is strengthened immeasurably through insights gained from our Mexican colleagues. The best way to foster these relationships is often to start with small cooperative projects and work up from there. Through personnel exchanges at museums, jointly sponsored conferences on the Camino Real, shared research, and critiques and input on interpretive programs, we are building personal and professional ties. Only through a sustained series of common projects can interest, sincerity, and commitment to our common heritage be demonstrated.

CONCLUSIONS

Historically, roads have played a central role in cultural exchange. Their importance transcends their mere physical presence on the landscape. El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro shaped the social, political, and economic spheres on both sides of the Rio Grande.

As work to commemorate and interpret the history of the Camino Real continues, we must not lose sight of the fact that this road and its modern derivatives continue to knit this region together. The sharing of common intellectual, religious, and cultural traditions continues along the Camino. All inhabitants of the region benefit from celebrating our common heritage in an age when nationalism, protectionism, and racism remain common and persistent threats. Through projects like the Heritage Center, and this volume, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro can continue to serve as a symbol of international exchange, understanding, and shared values. ♣

Thank you to the El Camino Real International Heritage Center design team of Dekker/Perich/Sabatini: William Sabatini—AIA principal-in-charge, Amy Eichenberger, and Mark Aylward. —SLF

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El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro

National Historic Trail Feasibility Study

Lawrence Beal



IN 1997 THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS) evaluated the feasibility and desirability of designating El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (the Royal Road of the Interior) as a national historic trail under the provisions of the National Trails System Act. The feasibility study was submitted to Congress in 1997. This paper presents portions of that study.

BACKGROUND

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was used for more than 300 years as the primary route between northern Mexico and what is now the southwestern United States. The study documents the international significance of the entire route from Mexico City to New Mexico's Spanish colonial capitals at San Juan de los Caballeros (1598–1600), San Gabriel (1600–1609), and Santa Fe (1609–1821). During that period, the road formed part of a network of royal roads throughout Mexico. With Mexican independence, the Camino Real ceased to be a “royal road” because the Spanish Crown had been ousted. The route, however, continued to be used by Mexican and Indian travelers, traders, settlers, soldiers, clergymen, and Anglo-American merchants. The significance of the road continued through the succeeding Mexican national period (1821–1848) and for part of the U.S. territorial period as well (1848–1882).

The Camino Real is nationally significant because of its use for conquest, colonization, missionary supply, commerce, cultural and biological exchange, and military campaigns. The emphasis of this study is on the part of the trail from El Paso, Texas, to San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico (Figure 24.1). It was prepared with the cooperation and assistance of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) of the government of Mexico. Although there is no legislation in Mexico comparable to the National Trails System Act, INAH has been active in documenting and preserving sites related to the Camino Real. The National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and INAH were co-hosts for the first international symposium on the history and culture of the people who used the trail. A second symposium co-sponsored by the Museum of New Mexico took place in October 1996. If the Camino Real is designated as a unit of the national trails system, and the Mexican government makes a similar designation for the route in Mexico, it

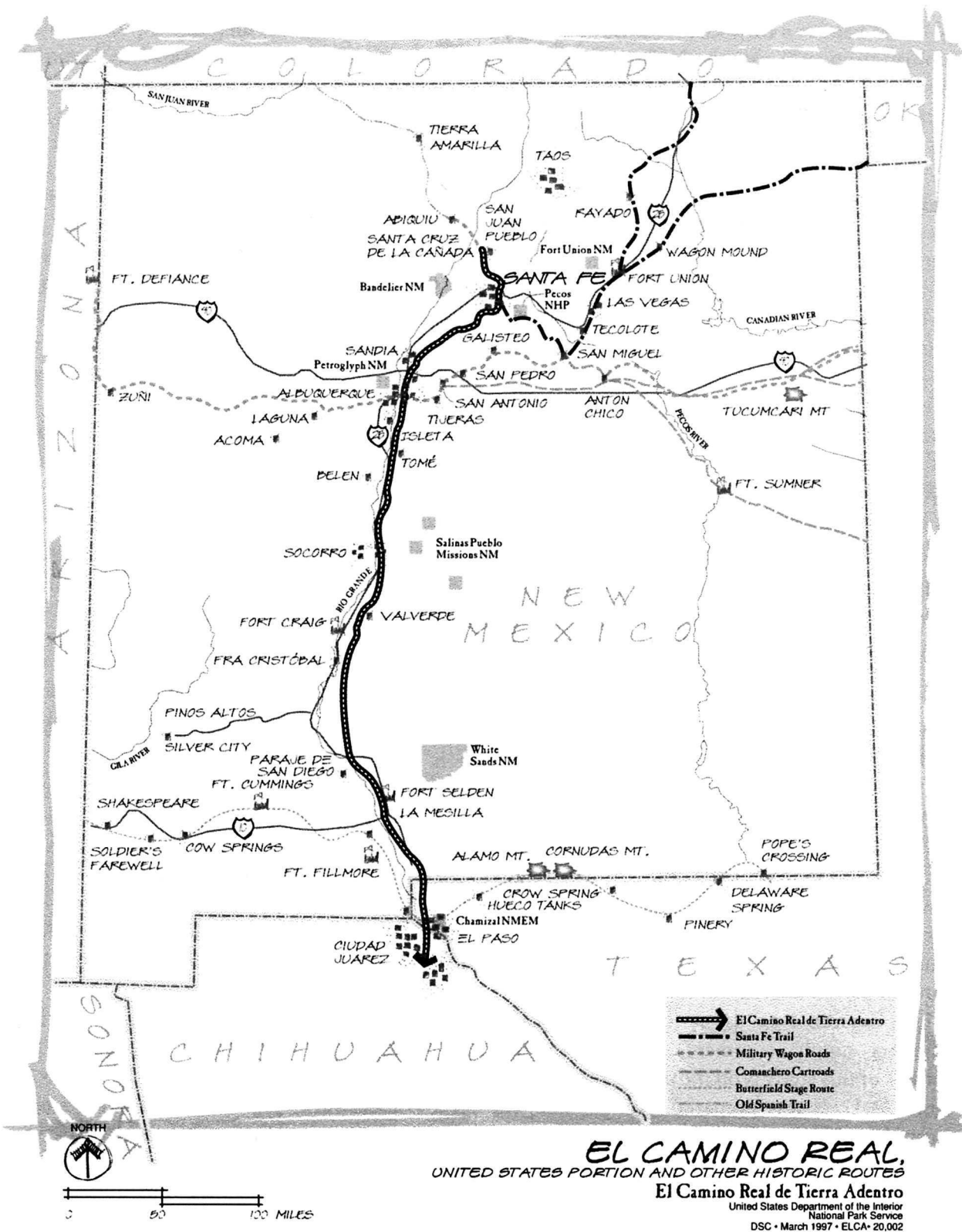


Fig. 24.1
Historic routes in New Mexico (NPS 1997)

could be the first mutually established international historic trail.

Throughout the preparation of the feasibility study the National Park Service has actively consulted with affected public agencies, organizations, individuals, and American Indian tribes. In addition, a technical team was established to ensure that there was an understanding of the goals of this study and the procedures for conducting it and to exchange information about related projects and programs. The team consisted of representatives of federal, state, and local agencies and individuals from private organizations and Indian pueblos, as well as independent researchers.

The study evaluated the feasibility of designating the Camino Real from El Paso, Texas, to San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico, as a 404-mile unit of the national trails system. San Juan Pueblo was chosen as the terminus of the trail because it was the site of the first provincial capital of the northern province of New Spain. The designation of the trail would offer important preservation opportunities resulting from some provisions of the National Trails System Act. Such designation would also encourage further research to improve the knowledge, understanding, appreciation, and protection of trail segments and related sites. It also would promote the overall commemoration of the national significance of the route.

If designated by Congress as a national historic trail, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro would be managed through cooperative partnerships with public agencies, private organizations, and landowners. The federal role would be to set and maintain standards, to provide technical and limited financial assistance to partners, and to help ensure consistent preservation, education, and public use programs. The designation of the Camino Real as a unit of the national trails system would make possible the coordination of activities along the length of the trail and with other trails such as the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. It also would mean increased coordination with the Mexican government on cultural resource preservation and educational programs related to the trail.

The passage of the 1993 legislation on the Camino Real resulted from several years of work by specialists from many disciplines with a keen interest in the heritage of Mexico, New Mexico, and west Texas. The legislation authorizing the study was based on the following findings by Congress, as enumerated in Public Law 103-26:

1. El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was the primary route for nearly 300 years that was used by clergy, colonists, soldiers, Indians, officials, and trade caravans between Mexico and New Mexico;
2. from the Spanish colonial period (1598–1821), through the Mexican national period (1821–1848), and through part of the United States territorial period (1848–1912), the Camino Real extended from Mexico City through Chihuahua City, El Paso del Norte, and on to Santa Fe in northern New Mexico;
3. the road was the first to be developed by Europeans in what is now the United States and for a time was one of the longest roads in North America; and
4. until the arrival of the railroad in the 1880s, the Camino Real witnessed and stimulated multicultural exchanges and the evolution of nations, peoples, and cultures.

The mandate to study the Camino Real as a potential national historic trail was based on research and documentation compiled by the Camino Real Project, Inc., in 1990. Funded through various sources, the project conducted research, prepared interpretive exhibits and highway markers, and developed cooperative agreements with the Latin American Institute of the University of New Mexico and the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), the Mexican agency with responsibility for the research and preservation of cultural sites. In addition, the State of New Mexico and the BLM have conducted studies and inventories to identify the route and history of the trail in New Mexico.

Because about three-quarters of the Camino Real extends between Mexico City and the U.S. border, the legislation also authorized the Secretary of the Interior to work in cooperation with the government of Mexico and its political subdivisions (including providing technical assistance) to determine the desirability and feasibility of establishing an international historic route. The study evaluated the entire route in order to document the significance, prehistory, and history of the part of the route in the United States.

THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

The national trails system was established by the National Trails System Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-543, 16 USC 1241 et seq.) “to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population and to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation.” The national trails system is composed of congressionally designated national scenic trails and national historic trails as well as national recreation trails, which are existing trails that the federal government recognizes as contributing to the national trails system. National scenic trails are continuous protected scenic corridors for outdoor recreation like the Appalachian or Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails. National recreation trails offer a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities in or reasonably accessible to urban areas. The National Trails System Act provides for a lead federal agency to administer each national scenic and national historic trail in cooperation with a variety of partners, including other federal agencies, state and local agencies, American Indians, local communities, and private landowners.

The purpose of national historic trails is the identification and protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. National historic trails are extended trails that follow as closely as possible and practicable original, historically significant routes of travel. The designation of such trails or routes is to be continuous, but the established or developed trails are not necessarily continuous land areas; they may include portions or sections of land areas, land and water segments, or other specific sites. Together these qualifying entities form a chain or network of areas that may be included as components of a national historic trail. National historic trail authorization would require federal funds for the planning, development, research, and/or management of the trail and related trail activities. Some of the existing authorized national historic trails are the Santa Fe, Oregon, Pony Express, Mormon Pioneer, and Lewis and Clark trails (Figure 24.2).

The National Trails System Act establishes additional criteria for a national historic trail, as follows:

1. It must be a trail or route established by historic use and must be historically significant as a result of that use.
2. It must be of national significance with respect to any of several broad facets of American history, and its historic use must have had a far-reaching effect on broad patterns of American culture.
3. It must have significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest based on historical interpretation and appreciation.

If Congress authorized a national historic trail, a management plan would be prepared to address its preservation and the public use and appreciation of the trail and its associated values. Existing trail segments already in federal ownership could become the initial components of the national trail. Other trail segments could be developed and protected through various means such as cooperative and certification agreements, easements, and actions by private organizations. Generally there would be little if any acquisition of private lands.

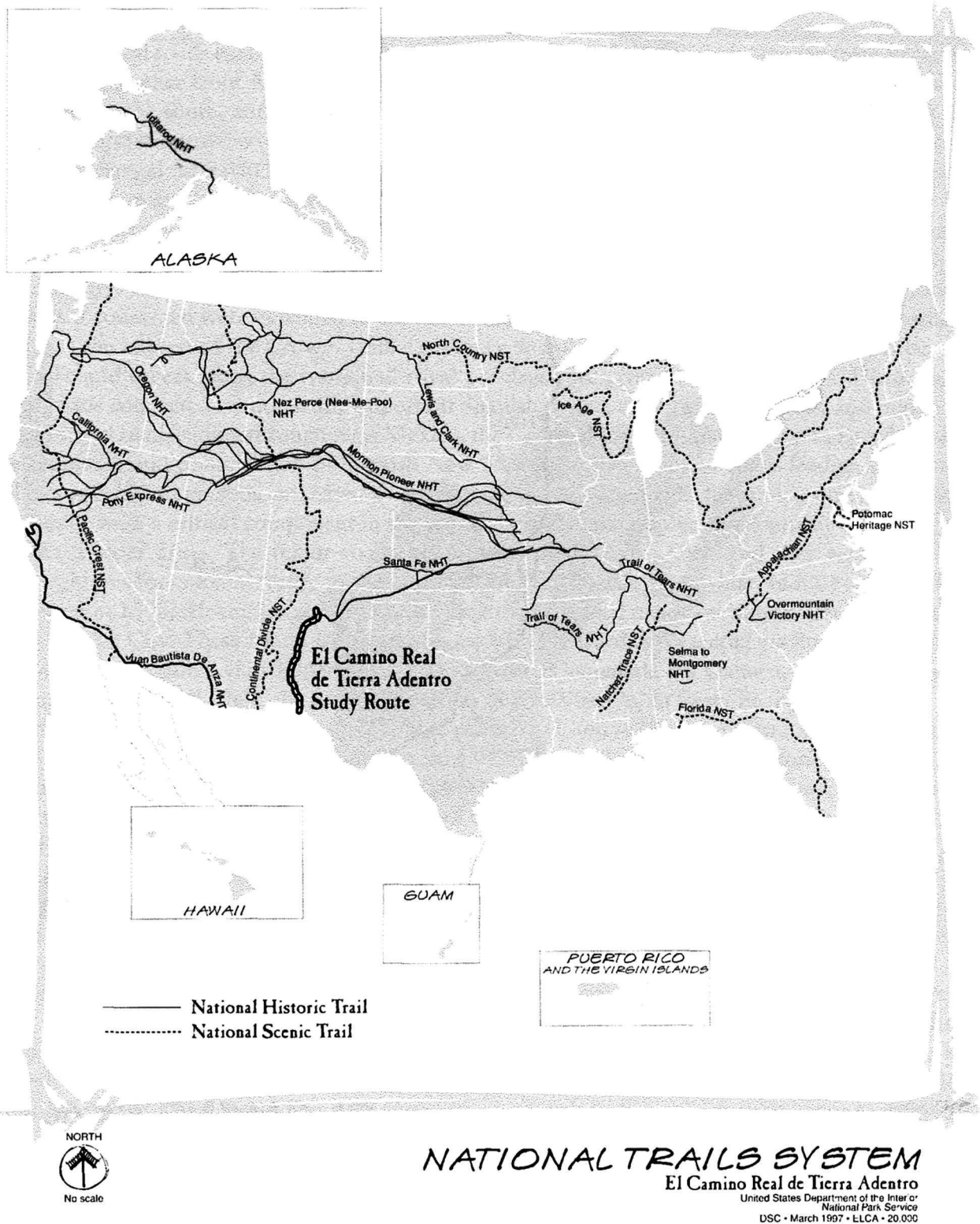


Fig. 24.2
The National Trails system (NPS 1997)



EL CAMINO REAL
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
DSC • March 1997 • El CA • 20.031

Fig. 24.3
The Camino Real in the U.S. and Mexico (NPS 1997)

DEFINITION AND DOCUMENTATION OF EL CAMINO REAL

Four main royal roads led to Mexico City during the Spanish colonial period. One ran from Veracruz in the east, another from Acapulco via Guadalajara in the west, a third crossed into Oaxaca from Honduras in the south, and the fourth road traversed the interior of Mexico from Santa Fe in the faraway northern province of New Mexico (Figure 24.3). These four provincial capitals connected with the viceregal capital in Mexico City, underscoring the traditional relationship established under Spanish custom and practice governing royal roads in Europe and the New World.

For a short period of time, the trail connected Mexico City with San Juan de los Caballeros and San Gabriel. When the capital of New Mexico was moved to Santa Fe in 1610, the trail linked it with Mexico City. The term *Camino Real* implied that the status and privileges granted to the villas and capitals it connected were extended to the main routes of travel through use by officials and others acting in the interest of the Crown. Unlike ordinary Spanish villages and Indian pueblos, villas like Santa Fe and others along the route had royal privileges prescribed in their charters. Historically, royal roads connected economically important Spanish towns, capitals of provinces, and mines. As the principal road leading through New Mexico, the Camino Real terminated in Santa Fe, which was the economic and political hub of Spanish New Mexico. Other colonial roads leading to Spanish villages and Indian pueblos emanated from Santa Fe or connected with the trail at different points.

Roads were a critical component in the economic and demographic development of New Spain and its frontier areas. The major roads led to and from Mexico City, and they were the main thoroughfares for colonial traffic to the provinces of the Mexican viceroyalty. In his political essay, published in 1808, Alexander von Humboldt identified the four major *caminos reales* that radiated from Mexico City. These routes led from Mexico City eastward to Veracruz via Puebla de Xalapa, westward to Acapulco via Chilpanzingo, southward to Guatemala via Oaxaca, and northward to Durango and beyond Chihuahua, then known as Nueva Vizcaya, to Santa Fe in New Mexico. The road to Santa Fe, Humboldt wrote, “is popularly called *El Camino [Real] de Tierra Adentro* (the royal road of the interior).” The route from Mexico City northward followed the historical development of mining, ranching, and farming that accompanied the push into the Gran Chichimeca, a large area encompassing the present-day Mexican states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Queretaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas, Durango, and northern Jalisco.

Although the route of El Camino Real was forged from prehistoric trails, the first phases of the European march northward from Mexico City took place in the late 1540s as silver mines were discovered in Queretaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosi, and Zacatecas. That stretch of the road was also known as El Camino de la Plata. The establishment of Zacatecas in 1546 represented an important phase in the development of the trail as Spanish settlers pushed northward to other areas, thus expanding the settlement and mining pattern beyond the Zacatecas–Durango frontier line. Beyond Zacatecas and just south of Durango, the presidial garrisons at San Martín and Llerena for a while marked the northernmost end of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. By 1575 the mining frontier and the Royal Road had been pushed as far north as Santa Bárbara in what is today the southern part of Chihuahua. Then, with the establishment of New Mexico by Juan de Oñate in 1598, the trail took a major jump northward from Santa Bárbara to the confluence of the Río Chama and the Río Grande in New Mexico.

ELIGIBILITY OF THE CAMINO REAL

To be a component of the national trails system, the National Trails System Act requires that trails be “extended trails,” at least 100 miles long. The segment of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro that is being considered for designation reaches from El Paso to San Juan Pueblo, about 404 miles. Around 42 miles of the route are in Texas and the remainder are in New Mexico. The segment from El Paso to Mexico City, which is a major part of the significance of the route, is about 1,150 miles.

As mentioned above, Section 5 of the act provides three broad criteria that a trail must meet to qualify for designation. The criteria are outlined below, followed by an analysis of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro for each one.

1. It must be a trail or route established by historic use and must be historically significant as a result of that use. The route need not currently exist as a discernible trail to qualify, but its location must be sufficiently known to permit evaluation of public recreation and historical interest potential. A designated trail should generally accurately follow the historic route, but may deviate somewhat to avoid difficult routing through subsequent development or to provide a more pleasurable recreational experience. Such deviations shall be so noted on-site. Trail segments that can no longer be traveled on foot or by other non-motorized transport because of subsequent development may be designated and marked on-site as segments which link to the historic trail.

Contemporary descriptions document the longevity of the Camino Real. It is historically significant with respect to the exploration, colonization, economic development, and cultural and biological exchange among Spanish, Anglo, and American Indian people in what is now the southwestern United States. Research conducted by the Spanish Colonial Research Center of the National Park Service (NPS 1995) has documented the sites, communities, and places associated with the Camino Real, based on written official documents, records of travelers, journals, and reports. In addition, the research conducted by Camino Real Project, Inc., and the Bureau of Land Management with archaeological consultant Michael Marshall (1991) has specifically identified extensive segments on U.S. Geological Survey maps.

Many segments of the original route and the sites associated with the trail have been identified. Several segments could be used to interpret the history of the American Southwest. They also could be used for recreational retracement by hikers, horseback riders, or wagons drawn by horses, mules, or oxen. This criterion is met.

2. It must be of national significance with respect to any of several broad facets of American history, such as trade and commerce, exploration, migration and settlement, or military campaigns. To qualify as nationally significant, historic use of the trail must have had a far-reaching effect on broad patterns of American culture. Trails significant in the history of American Indians may be included.

The Camino Real played a very significant role in exploration, migration, settlement, trade and commerce, and military campaigns. The road was more than a route of travel and supply; it was the agent for cultural and biological exchange. The trail facilitated cultural exchange, diffusion, communication, and conflict among American Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, and Anglos. While the trail brought many benefits of the Spanish culture to indigenous peoples, it also led to the destruction of many aspects of their cultures. The Camino Real is the symbol of the linkage and shared patrimony of Mexico and the United States and of many different ethnic groups and cultures. This criterion is met.

3. It must have significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest based on historic interpretation and appreciation. The potential for such use is generally greater along roadless segments developed as historic trails and at historic sites associated with the trail.

The Camino Real has high potential for recreational use and historical interest. Many segments of the route of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro remain much as they were in the past. The route of El Camino Real can be clearly seen through the sparse desert vegetation of Mexico, west Texas, and New Mexico. The width of the trail corridor varied in response to the terrain. In some segments the corridor was very wide; in others, it was quite narrow. Locations of specific sites, such as river crossing points, were moved historically as river levels and bank conditions changed.

A number of historic sites and potential interpretive facilities along the trail provide opportunities to continue existing programs and to develop new ones to foster historical appreciation and interpretation based on the history of the Camino Real and the cultures of the people who traveled the road. Most of the original route and the sites associated with the trail can be identified. About one-third of the trail has been identified on the ground. There are opportunities for retracing the trail on public lands, and the potential exists for additional areas of public access on public and private lands with the cooperation of the landowners. This criterion is met.

S I G N I F I C A N C E

The development of roads is a significant and necessary function of the historical process of nation states. However, the historic roads of Mexico and the southwestern United States are as much indigenous in character and purpose as they are the product of state-level development, and factors regarding their use prior to European intrusions influenced the location of many of the colonial roads established between 1521 and 1821. The origins of almost all colonial roads are therefore obscure, and use of the route that became known as the Camino Real began in an unspecified time when prehistoric peoples blazed a series of trade routes from the Valley of Mexico toward the Río Grande in the north. As trader-explorers, Aztec merchants also used local guides and information to run their trails northward.

American Indians, and particularly the Rio Grande Pueblos, established routes for trade and communications long before the arrival of the Europeans. One of these trade routes would later become the route of the Camino Real. Archaeological sites on or near the later colonial route document the varied cultures of the many groups who used it for transportation and communication. Traders and travelers along these prehistoric routes helped to disseminate new ideas and technologies and connected American Indian groups, principally Pueblos, who came from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Later, Pueblos provided food, goods, and services to the Spaniards as they traveled and settled along the Camino Real. The cultural interaction of the Spanish and American Indian cultures is apparent at pueblo missions and throughout rural New Mexico.

In Mexico, routes and corridors from the Central Valley to places lying within the edges of the Aztec domain were well-defined for travel. However, precolumbian roads that extended into New Mexico were not well developed beyond the central highlands. Unlike the roads developed by Europeans for wagons and animals of burden, indigenous trails were relatively primitive and generally used for foot traffic. In contrast, late-sixteenth-century Spanish colonial roads combined ancient trails with ones newly constructed, some with bridges, to areas with economic potential. Historically, the east-west and south-north pathways from Mexico City followed the pattern of conquest, economic expansion to mining areas, and the seasonal and alternating movement of livestock together with the people who tended the herds. Narrative accounts of the route describe its use throughout the centuries. These written records contain a wealth of information about daily life,

settlements, topography, as well as place names along the trail.

The historical period of significance for the Camino Real in the United States extends from 1598 to 1882. Throughout that period, traders and travelers along the trail promoted cultural interaction among Spaniards, Indians, Mexicans, other Europeans, and Americans. It made possible the exploration, conquest, colonization, settlement, and military occupation of a large segment of the borderlands. The Camino Real facilitated the emigration of Spanish colonials to New Mexico and other areas of what would become the United States. It also fostered the spread of Roman Catholicism, the growth of mining, and the development of an extensive network of commerce.

Historic, ethnic, and cultural traditions were transmitted along the Camino Real—particularly music, folk tales, medicine, and sayings, architecture, geographic place names, language, irrigation systems, and Spanish law. A variety of foodstuffs, including the chili pepper, were also introduced into New Mexico by the Spanish settlers who entered the territory via the Camino Real. Among the legal concepts currently used in the American legal system that were brought north along the Camino Real are community property laws, the concept of first use/first priority in water rights, mining claims, and the idea of sovereignty, especially as applied to American Indian land claims. While there were many benefits from the exchange of Spanish and indigenous cultures, many aspects of indigenous cultures have been lost because of the influence of Spanish culture.

Commerce has always been an integral component of the history of the Camino Real, but the nature and the extent of the commercial activities evolved through time. Early trade was mostly limited to the mission supply service, which ended at the provincial capital of Santa Fe. With time it expanded and began to involve other communities and ethnic groups. The success of the Taos trade fair is a good example of the evolving nature of the commercial exchange, which involved not just merchants from Ciudad Chihuahua and New Mexico, but also fur traders from the United States and Europe as well as Pueblos, Comanches, and other American Indian tribes.

After Mexican independence and the opening of the Santa Fe Trail in 1821, the nature of the commercial operations became increasingly complex as larger shipments became the norm and capital requirements grew dramatically. El Camino Real became an integral part of an international network of commerce that culminated in the transportation and exchange of millions of dollars worth of merchandise between Europe, the United States, New Mexico, and other provinces of the Mexican republic.

The commercial network that developed around the Camino Real after the opening of the Santa Fe Trail extended far beyond Mexico and Santa Fe. This extensive pattern of economic relations involved two continents—Europe and North America—and several countries—Mexico, the United States, England, and France. Commercial activities associated with the trade extended west to the California coast; south from the Arkansas River into Mexico; southeast to New Orleans; east beyond Missouri to New York, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and other eastern cities; and across the Atlantic Ocean, particularly to Liverpool and London. By the 1850s trade was linked to commercial hubs in Mexico, the United States, and Europe, where commission merchants, wholesalers, and agents completed intricate transactions that required planning and advance information on prices and demand, a complicated credit system, coordination between various types of transportation, and considerable risk-taking and entrepreneurial skills.

Trail activities had a major effect on the landscape along the corridor; they affected biotic communities and promoted horticultural diffusion. The introduction of the horse and European cattle and agriculture, the introduction of exotic flora, the transportation of large herds of sheep to Mexico, extensive mining activities, and, to a lesser degree, commercial enterprises all contributed to a dramatic alteration of the surroundings of the trail.

The Camino Real has been associated with notable historic figures of both the American and Hispanic frontiers and pivotal events in the history of the western United States. One of the most important individuals was Juan Pérez de Oñate, son of one of the founders of Zacatecas, who established the northern part of El Camino Real and founded the first capital in New Mexico at San Juan de los Caballeros, almost a decade before the first English colonists landed at Jamestown, Virginia. As a result of Oñate's efforts, Santa Fe, destined to be the Spanish capital of New Mexico, had been founded by 1610, less than a century after Cortes's conquest of Mexico City. Governor Diego de Vargas made possible the 1692 reconquest of the territory after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 had forced the Spanish settlers to flee from the northern reaches of the territory and settle in a string of villages along the Río Grande near El Paso.

Another important figure was Father Juan Agustín Morfi, who visited New Mexico in 1777 and wrote extensive reports on conditions in the territory. Governor Juan Bautista de Anza was another official whose exploits have been closely associated with the Camino Real. He helped to pacify Indian tribes, especially the Comanches, which in turn made possible a dramatic increase in fur trading activities and eventually the development and growth of the Santa Fe trade with the United States.

American travelers and traders have also been associated with the trail. From Zebulon Montgomery Pike to Josiah Gregg, the accounts of their adventures down the Camino Real highlight the impact the trail has had on the history of a large part of the Southwest.

Political and commercial leaders were also closely linked to the trail. Territorial Governor Henry Connelly had been an influential Santa Fe Trail merchant who traveled and traded along the Camino Real. Miguel Antonio Otero, New Mexican delegate to Congress before the Civil War, had been involved in trading and continued to pursue this activity after his congressional term ended.

Equally important were other New Mexican merchants like José Felipe Chávez. A successful entrepreneur, he lived in Belen and became one of the richest men in the territory. His skillful management of personal resources, local products, and business connections, coupled with hard work, determination, and informed risk-taking, allowed him to strengthen his economic standing and gain considerable influence. His career was exceptional, but not unique. Other New Mexican merchants rivaled him in wealth, influence, and skills. Their ventures along El Camino Real reveal that many Hispanos possessed a strong drive for "material productiveness" that allowed them to take advantage of the opportunities commerce offered.

An important military figure associated with El Camino Real was Col. Alexander Doniphan, who defeated Mexican forces at the battle of Brazito and later captured Ciudad Chihuahua during the Mexican War. Notable leaders who led their men along El Camino Real during the American Civil War were Confederate Maj. Henry H. Sibley and Col. Edward R. S. Canby, the commander of the Union forces in New Mexico.

With the completion of the railroad line between Albuquerque and El Paso in the 1880s, the use of the trail on the U.S. side of the border began to decline, but it continued to be important because it provided an essential link between New Mexican merchants and their counterparts in Mexico. The close cultural and economic ties that have characterized the history of the Camino Real continued into the twentieth century.

Although it is no longer used as a trail, having been supplanted first by Highway 85 and later by Interstate Highway 25, it has maintained its significance. El Camino Real has become a symbol of the cultural interaction between nations and ethnic groups and of the commercial exchange that made possible the development and growth of the borderlands.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Camino Real provides many opportunities for cooperation among state, local, and federal agencies or other entities. Existing partnerships could be continued and expanded to enhance efforts to identify, protect, and interpret the history, culture, and significance of the trail. New partnerships could be developed with federal, state, and local agencies, private groups, individuals, and American Indian groups.

There is considerable grassroots community support, appreciation, and interest in the protection and commemoration of the Camino Real. One of the major opportunities is the development of an international heritage center south of Socorro, as planned by New Mexico State Monuments and the Bureau of Land Management. This center would be a focal point of trail-related activities and programs (see Chapter 23).

The National Park Service has worked with the staff of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia from the state of Chihuahua, Mexico, in organizing trail-related activities. NPS and the BLM will continue to work with officials from Mexico to conduct research on the history of the Camino Real and to assist, as appropriate, in the identification, interpretation, and protection of sites in the United States and Mexico related to the trail.

Public and private groups from all levels of government and along the entire route of El Camino Real have expressed considerable interest in protecting and commemorating the trail. Each of these groups is willing and eager to share in the task of telling the story of El Camino Real.

TRAIL DESIGNATION

If Congress designates the Camino Real as a national historic trail, preservation strategies would be focused along the route to preserve and interpret the many resources that are represented by civilian, religious, indigenous, and military archaeological and historical sites, as well as trail remnants and natural and historic landscapes. Congress would identify a lead federal agency to administer the trail in cooperation with a variety of day-to-day management partners, including state, local, and other federal agencies, American Indian tribes, local communities, and private landowners. The administrative activities would include preparing a comprehensive management and use plan, identifying sites and segments with significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest; developing cooperative agreements; certifying qualified sites; and stimulating, assisting, and coordinating preservation and interpretative activities of various government and nongovernmental organizations and private entities.

The administering agency also would develop a uniform marker and, where appropriate, mark the trail and auto tour route; provide technical and limited financial assistance; assist and conduct historical and archaeological research; carry out monitoring to ensure the preservation and quality of certified sites, segments, and facilities; manage the official logo for proper use; establish approaches to interpretation; and prepare interpretive materials.

The purpose of the comprehensive management and use plan would be to help achieve consistent and effective preservation, public use, and interpretive strategies. The comprehensive management and use plan could include provisions to work cooperatively with state and local governments and landowners to help preserve the natural landscapes along El Camino Real.

In addition, the administering agency could offer programs to qualified organizations and property owners for any of the following national historic trail-related purposes:

- preservation
- research
- interpretation

- technical and financial assistance
- recognition programs for partners
- appropriate public use of sites
- liability protection for qualifying landowners
- trail marking

The voluntary process for certifying sites along the proposed El Camino Real National Historic Trail would be similar to the process used for other national historic trails. Certified trail properties would be nonfederal historic sites, trail segments, and interpretive facilities that met the standards of the administering agency for resources preservation and public enjoyment. Certification is a partnership or a type of cooperative agreement that has the flexibility to meet the landowner's needs while ensuring protection and appropriate public use.

Specific actions on private lands would depend on efforts by the federal administering agency or other partners to provide incentives and on the interest of partners in the development, protection, and interpretation of sites along the trail. The public lands along the trail provide many opportunities for public use and the appreciation and enjoyment of the Camino Real. At this time little if any federal land acquisition is anticipated.

The designation would offer important preservation opportunities resulting from some provisions of the National Trails System Act. Designation would encourage further research to improve the knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of trail segments and related sites. It also would promote the overall commemoration of its national significance. Technical assistance might be provided to document the significance of sites and to identify the most appropriate techniques for preserving significant sites. Other assistance would help to stabilize and, where appropriate, restore significant resources for the purposes of protection and interpretation.

The designation of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro as a unit of the national trails system would lead to opportunities to coordinate activities along the length of the trail and with other trails such as the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. It also would mean increased opportunities for coordinating activities with the Mexican and Spanish governments and other institutions that might be interested in developing appropriate preservation and educational programs for trail resources, conducting research, and exchanging information and knowledge.

Interpretation

The interpretation of the Camino Real for the public would focus on three areas: the story and significance, the place and landscape, and the people. Story and significance are listed together because they are essentially inseparable. The trail is significant because of its story. Whether recorded in histories, oral traditions, memories, or customs, the stories are cultural resources.

From a distance, much of the landscape of the Camino Real today generally resembles its appearance during its period of use. Designation as a national historic trail would provide opportunities for visitors to retrace the historic route and see the same patterns today. They would be able to visit places like the last camps before La Jornada del Muerto and perhaps to imagine the feelings of the early travelers sitting around the campfire at night before setting off the next morning. Journals and other accounts confirm how central the landscape was to the experience of travelers on the Camino Real. Many of the same enticing vistas, cool rivers, and hot, dusty expanses would be preserved for visitors to enjoy and appreciate.

People are the third area on which interpretation could be focused. American Indian use of the Río Grande valley before and throughout the Spanish period would be interpreted. Many important people were associated with the trail, including Popé, Juan de Oñate, Juan Bautista de Anza, Father

Morfi, Zebulon Pike, Josiah Gregg, Stephen Watts Kearny, Felipe Chávez, and José Cordero. Many more traveled on the trail; workers on ranches and in industries were dependent on the trail; residents of haciendas and communities grew up along the trail. There were missionaries who sought to spread their religion and native spiritual leaders who sought to maintain their ways, protect their people, and understand the new colonial world. There were government functionaries and soldiers, and there were children. Theirs are the stories that would be told through the designation of the Camino Real as a national historic trail.

Facilities could include visitor centers, contact stations, and unattended kiosks. Exhibits would be an important means of telling the interpretive story. Graphics could show various and distant landscapes and illustrate changes over the centuries. Audiovisual programs, interactive devices, models, dioramas, or other media might join with objects, text, and illustrations to tell stories and excite interest. Wayside exhibits could be placed at road pullouts, vistas, historic sites or features, or trailheads and along trails.

Visitor Use Opportunities

A range of visitor use opportunities could be developed on public lands and private properties that have been certified with landowner concurrence regarding terms for public use. Easements might also be acquired to provide for public use. Such use would be managed so that there would not be any degradation of archaeological or historic sites. Existing trail systems could be expanded for hiking, wagon tours, and horseback riding. In addition, an auto tour route could be marked along parallel roads and highways. There could even be opportunities for using the train tracks paralleling the route for interpretive train trips along the route of the Camino Real. Audiocassette tapes or special radio programs could be made available to help motorists appreciate the history of the areas.

Interpretation along many segments of the trail could be enhanced, particularly in such areas as La Jornada del Muerto or the Santa Fe River Canyon. For example, stories could be told about the artifacts found along the trail, from precolonial pottery shards and stone tools to nineteenth-century food cans, bottles, and tobacco tins.

Another opportunity is the recording of oral histories from descendants of the merchants and settlers who used the Camino Real. Ethnographic interviews would provide the connection to the families of the people who traveled the trail.

Besides retracing the trail, additional methods of experiencing El Camino Real could be explored. For example, areas of difficult access could be documented in video form and shared with people who are unable or unwilling to endure trail travel. Local community groups could become more involved in educating the public and promoting the preservation and appropriate use of resources associated with the trail. The public would have opportunities to take part in the following activities:

- participate in living history programs and festivals
- visit sites and segments along nearly the entire length of the trail in the United States, including segments with visible ruts or other physical remains, archaeological sites, historic structures, towns, and related cultural landscapes
- visit sites and segments offering a range of visitor services, from highly developed facilities to remote and primitive ones
- enjoy access to important and representative sites and segments and information, without impairing the resource or visitor experience values of those sites and segments; this should be a priority to serve groups who might find access to some resources difficult, such as visitors with disabilities, children, non-English-speaking visitors, and economically disadvantaged people

- participate in the preservation of physical, cultural, and traditional resources associated with the Camino Real; this could include volunteer programs to participate in stabilization and research in such fields as archaeology, history, anthropology, architecture, and American and Mexican studies
- experience and learn about the trail in Mexico if and when complementary programs are developed. International exchange and cooperation could enhance visitor opportunities in both the United States and Mexico.

CONCLUSION

A bill amending the National Trail Systems Act to include the Camino Real was approved by the Senate in 1998 (a similar bill was introduced in the House but not heard). The bill will be reintroduced in both houses in 1999. ♣

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Perspectives on the Camino Real in New Mexico

Oakah L. Jones



TRAVERSING THE CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO between Santa Fe and El Paso today, the traveler may well be impressed with the historical importance of the route and the diversity of geographical features, as well as the people from at least three cultures who dwell there. The route extends for a distance of some 310 miles (496 kilometers) roughly paralleling Interstate Highway 25, with altitudes ranging from 6,954 feet (2,120 meters) at Santa Fe to 3,762 feet (1,148 meters) at El Paso. Along the way one encounters or sees, to the east, mountains of various ranges, including the Sangre de Cristos, Sandías, Manzanos, Caballos, and Franklins. However, the most prominent and continuous geographical feature is the Río Grande del Norte (also called the Río del Norte or the Río Bravo). Along or near its banks are La Bajada between Santa Fe and Bernalillo, Tomé Hill, La Jornada del Muerto, and the Mesilla Valley. Flora along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro varies from the juniper and piñon in the north to the semi-desert yucca, chamisa, and sagebrush and finally to the lush green fields of the Mesilla Valley, where chile, cotton, vegetables, and fruits are grown in abundance.

This trail through New Mexico and its counterpart from Ciudad Juárez (the original El Paso del Norte) to the cities of Chihuahua, Hidalgo del Parral (formerly San José del Parral), Valle de Allende (formerly Valle de San Bartolomé), Santa Bárbara, Durango, Zacatecas, Querétaro, and Mexico City, a total distance of 1,450 miles (2,320 kilometers), have served as a principal route of transportation, communication, exploration, colonization, settlement, and trade for thousands of years.

Communities that have been founded by various cultures across the centuries have endured to the present day. Native American villages abound: Santo Domingo, Cochití, San Felipe, Sandía, Isleta, and three pueblos southeast of El Paso—Ysleta, Socorro, and Senecú del Sur. Spanish and Mexican towns exist in profusion: Santa Fe, Bernalillo, Algodones, Corrales, Alameda, Albuquerque, Atrisco, Peralta, Valencia, Los Lunas, Belén, Tomé, San Antonio, Sabinal, Socorro, Las Cruces, Mesilla, Doña Ana, and El Paso itself. Added to these communities are those with Anglo-American names, such as Garfield, Truth or Consequences (formerly Hot Springs), Hatch, and Anthony, along with the region of Elephant Butte and dam.

Known, used, and settled by Amerindians for hundreds of years (perhaps thousands) before the

arrival of the Spaniards (Riley 1995:113; see also Brugge, this volume), the route along the Río Grande became the principal one between New Mexico and Nueva Vizcaya from the mid-sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries. It was used by Spaniards—explorers, conquistadors, colonizers, merchants, Franciscan missionaries, travelers, soldiers, visiting officials, and those carrying mail back and forth between the northern provinces of New Spain and Mexico City. After Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, the Camino Real continued to be used by Mexicans as the primary route for commerce between Mexico and New Mexico. In the Mexican period (1821–1846) it also served as an extension of the international trade from the United States along the Santa Fe Trail (begun in 1822) when North American goods were transported from Santa Fe to El Paso and Mexico along what became known as the Chihuahua Trail. After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) ceded New Mexico to the United States, the Camino Real continued to be used by merchants and settlers, who brought goods and customs to New Mexico as well as products from the United States for eventual sale and trade with Mexico.

Over the course of almost three centuries, in addition to the thousands of people who settled in New Mexico, many prominent persons either traveled along the trail or participated in significant historical events nearby. Spanish explorers, such as Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, Captain Francisco Sánchez Chamuscado, fray Agustín Rodríguez, Antonio de Espejo, and Gaspar Castaño de Sosa, visited or camped along the Río Grande between 1540 and 1590, although none of them entered New Mexico via what would become the Camino Real. The expedition of Juan de Morlete, who had been sent from Saltillo to arrest Castaño de Sosa for illegal entry into New Mexico, returned by a route described as two hundred leagues shorter than the way they came; it was probably along the Río Grande to what later became known as El Paso del Norte, roughly following the trail of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (Hammond and Rey 1966:46–47; Schroeder and Matson 1965:175–176). Seven years later, in April 1598, Juan de Oñate entered New Mexico at El Paso del Norte and claimed it for the King of Spain. His colonizing expedition of men, women, children, and animals then followed the trail which he named the “Camino Real de Tierra Adentro,” from El Paso del Norte to San Juan Pueblo where he established the first Spanish community near today's Española north of Santa Fe (Riley 1995:247–48; Simmons 1991:49, 100, 111, 195, and map, pp. 94–95; Hammond and Rey 1953:16–17).

Thereafter, the trail became the principal route tying New Mexico with cities in northern New Spain. Colonists, Franciscan supply caravans, and visitors to New Mexico (such as fray Alonso de Benavides) used the Camino Real. The Pueblo Revolt of August 1680 occurred under the leadership of Popé and other Pueblo leaders in the Tewa villages north of Santa Fe and the Tano pueblos south of the capital. Expelled from the Santa Fe, Río Arriba, and Río Abajo regions, Governor Antonio de Otermín, Alonso de García, and the surviving Spaniards, along with more than three hundred Amerindians from Isleta and the Piro pueblos, retreated down the road to El Paso del Norte. Twelve years later, Governor Diego de Vargas led a reconnaissance expedition northward, and in 1693, accompanied by settlers, soldiers, missionaries, and a Pueblo interpreter, Vargas followed the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro northward for the reconquest and resettlement of New Mexico. During the eighteenth century, in addition to the hundreds of people who settled the province, soldiers, ecclesiastics, merchants, and other prominent persons utilized the Camino Real. They included such notables as Juan Bautista de Anza, Pedro de Rivera, the Marqués de Rubí, and Nicolás de Lafora.

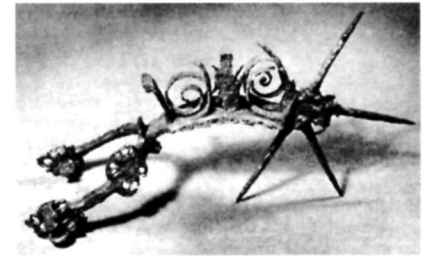


Fig. 25.1

16th century Spanish spur, sometimes called a “conquistador spur.” Found at Pecos Pueblo ruins, New Mexico. Photo Marc Simmons. Courtesy Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe.

During the nineteenth century Anglos also began to use the Camino Real. For example, in the 1830s James Magoffin became a prominent merchant in the city of Chihuahua, where he was heavily involved in the Santa Fe–Chihuahua trade, and in 1841 he led a caravan with forty wagons of merchandise to St. Louis via Santa Fe, following the trail from Chihuahua to El Paso and then through New Mexico before connecting with the Santa Fe Trail (Moorhead 1958:83–84, n. 18; Timmons 1990:83–84). During the Mexican-American War, Cols. Stephen Watts Kearny and Alexander Doniphan led invading armies from the United States and followed a portion or all of the trail southward, accompanied by North American merchants. Samuel Magoffin, brother of James and one of these merchants, and his bride, Susan Shelby Magoffin, traveled along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Susan Magoffin's diary (Drumm, ed. 1926) provides an eyewitness account of travel conditions along the trail from Santa Fe to El Paso (Moorhead 1958:156). During the early years of the Civil War in the United States, Confederate invasion forces led by Major Henry S. Sibley and Lt. Col. John R. Baylor followed the Camino Real from El Paso to Albuquerque and Santa Fe before they were turned back on March 27 and 28, 1862, after defeats at Glorieta Pass and Apache Canyon east of Santa Fe. Forces led by Cols. John P. Slough, William R. Scurry, and Major John M. Chivington of the Colorado Volunteers thus preserved New Mexico and Colorado for the Union. Sibley's army retreated along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, and at Peralta, south of Albuquerque, they were defeated again by Col. Edward R. S. Canby and Union forces in the last battle of the Civil War in New Mexico (Keleher 1952:179–180, 186). From 1878 to 1881, General Lew Wallace, the author of *Ben Hur*, resided in Santa Fe as territorial governor of New Mexico. In his journeys to southern New Mexico, he became one more famous person to follow a portion or most of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (Jones 1985:138, 146).

ANTHOLOGY

The chapters in this volume are the products of research and expertise by a diverse collection of authors. They relate to the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and developments in New Mexico during the Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo-American periods. Principally the contributions of these experts are in five categories:

- Defining and marking the trail
- People who traveled the Camino Real
- Political and military persons and events
- Trade and commerce
- Cultural achievements and the transmission of customs and traditions

Three essays describe sites, routes, and fords of the Río Grande along or near the trail. In Chapter 2 Mike Marshall examines the route and related *parajes* (stopping places) in northern Chihuahua. The product of field research with fellow archaeologist John Roney in October 1988, Marshall's study defines probable routes and stopping places south of El Paso del Norte toward the city of Chihuahua. Of special note is Marshall's identification of an alternate route from El Paso through San Elizario which rejoined the main route of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro just north of the sand dunes of Samalayuca. Historian Dan Scurlock (Chapter 3) discusses changing routes of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro as a response to floods, channel movements, and fords. In Chapter 17, Scurlock discusses the prominent landmark of Tomé Hill and its adjacent plaza during the Spanish and Mexican periods. He examines the origin of the name, the first settlement of the plaza, and Spanish expeditions which passed by or camped at the site south of Albuquerque, emphasizing the importance of Tomé as a stopping place on the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro for caravans, explorers, and the conduct of mail separate from the trade caravans.

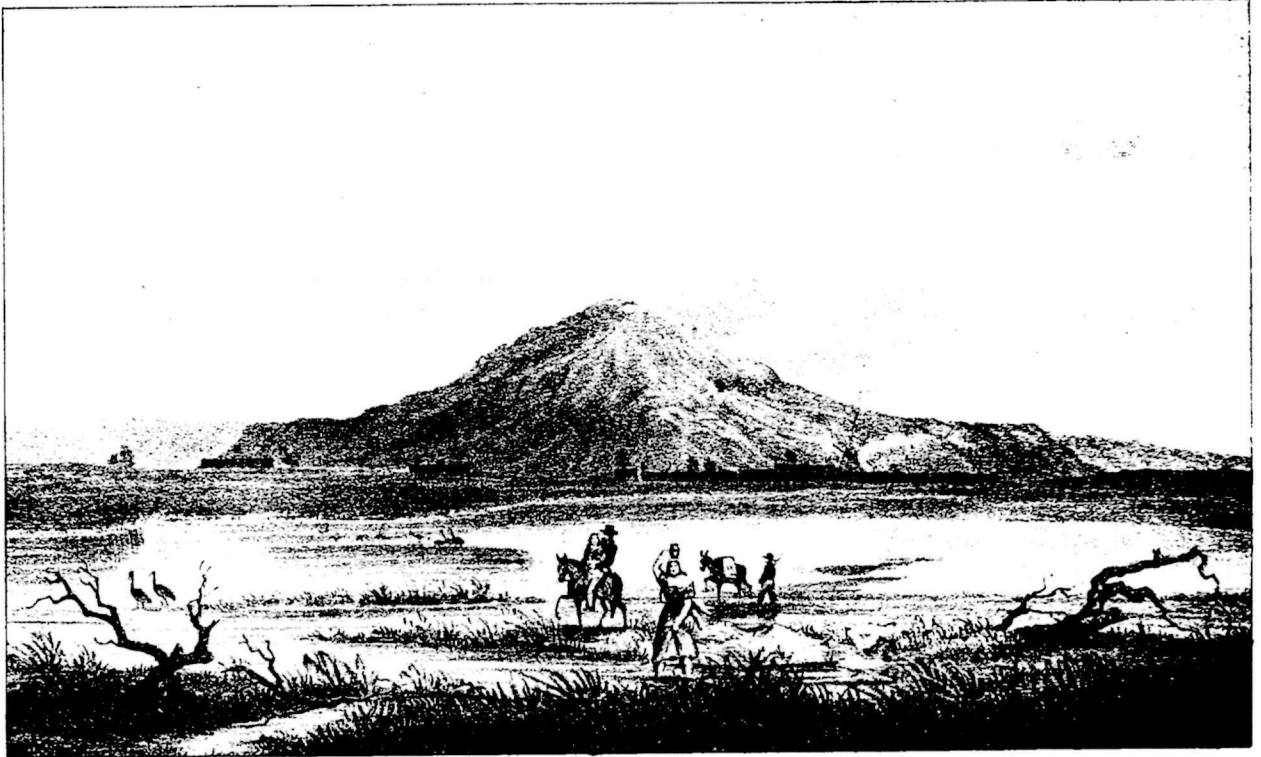


Fig. 25.2

The town of Valencia, south of Albuquerque, and nearby lava-topped mesa named Tomé Hill. From W.H. Emory, Notes on a Military Reconnaissance from Fort Leavenworth to San Diego, Washington, D.C., 1848. Reproduced in Andrew K. Gregg, New Mexico in the Nineteenth Century: A Pictorial History, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1968.

Three chapters pertain to the people who traveled along or lived near the trail. In an essay researched from primary sources in Mexico and the United States, José Antonio Esquibel, genealogist and historian, examines in detail the human side of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Esquibel (Chapter 4) relates a story of human interest, describing the recruitment of colonists for New Mexico in Mexico City by fray Francisco Farfán and Captain Cristóbal de Velasco in 1693. Thereafter he discusses individual persons on the expedition which departed from Mexico City in mid-September 1693, arrived at El Paso del Norte in late April or early May 1694, and reached Santa Fe in June of that same year. Of special note in this essay are Esquibel's descriptions of the route over which some two hundred colonists traveled and the events they experienced, including births and deaths. Finally he notes that some of these colonists settled Santa Cruz de la Cañada in the Española Valley north of Santa Fe in 1695. Esquibel observes that New Mexican settlers transported the culture of Mexico City to the "far northern frontier," contributing to the society, culture, and economy of New Mexico in the Spanish period.

Mary Jean Cook's essay on Gertrudis Barceló (Chapter 18) is a study of the controversial woman known as "Doña Tules" from the viewpoint of her travels and economic activities along the Camino Real. She traveled over the trail as early as 1816 when she arrived at the village of Valencia, south of Albuquerque. Based on research of primary documents at the New Mexico State Records Center and in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, Cook's study is an objective, well-balanced examination of the life and activities of a prominent woman living in Santa Fe during the Mexican period, especially her role as a banker, and her engagement in commerce along the trails to other provinces of Mexico and to the United States. In Chapter 20 Mary Taylor examines the life, work, and

conflicts of Ramón Ortiz, a prominent Franciscan parish priest (*cura*) at El Paso del Norte and elsewhere. Based upon extensive research in the archives of Ciudad Juárez, the mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, and the archdioceses of Chihuahua and Durango, Taylor's essay mentions that Ortiz traveled over part of the Mexican portion of Camino Real to Durango in the 1830s.

Four essays pertain to the administration of New Mexico and military expeditions with emphasis upon the use of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. State historian Robert Torrez, in Chapter 8, provides an excellent account of procedures employed for soldiers escorting merchant caravans along the trail. Using Governor Pedro María de Allende's document from the Spanish Archives of New Mexico, Torrez translates and discusses the instructions for a military escort of twenty soldiers for the caravan assembled at Sevilleta, New Mexico, and procedures for conducting inventories of traders' goods, flocks, livestock, horse herds, weapons for defense, and equipment. In addition, the document contains rules for *vecinos* (citizens or inhabitants), warning them not to travel alone, and regulations for their trade in El Paso and Chihuahua.

Rick Hendricks, an accomplished historian, concentrates in Chapter 15 upon the two eighteenth-century Spanish colonial administrations of Antonio Valverde y Cosío and Manuel Antonio San Juan to describe the nature of the communities and society that developed in the El Paso region. Employing research in archival sources and published documents, Hendricks discusses not only the origins and growth of the five communities at El Paso del Norte, but the development of agriculture there and the land and material possessions of Valverde and San Juan. The products of the vineyards at El Paso del Norte were shipped north to Santa Fe and south to Chihuahua over the Camino Real, the latter possibly along the alternate route discussed by Marshall in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 19, Mark L. Gardner focuses upon two military campaigns staged from Santa Fe during the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). These expeditions, led respectively by Cols. Alexander Doniphan and Sterling Price, descended the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro from Santa Fe to Chihuahua, engaging with Mexican forces at Brazito and Sacramento before occupying the city of Chihuahua. In addition, Gardner's study describes Doniphan's problems with merchants and their caravans which accompanied the army from Valverde southward to El Paso and Chihuahua. In Chapter 21 Gardner concentrates upon one entrepreneur along the Camino Real. Miguel Harmony, a New York resident, brought trade goods over the Santa Fe Trail following Col. Stephen Watts Kearny in August of 1846. From Santa Fe, he traveled with his wagons to El Paso with the forces of Colonel Doniphan. En route to Chihuahua he was involved in a dispute with Doniphan, resulting in the military commandeering Harmony's wagons of merchandise, and eventually in 1852 a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court reimbursed Harmony for the loss of his goods.

Six studies focus on trade along the trail. Drawing from their painstaking research on wills, inventories, and other documents from the Spanish Archives of New Mexico, as well as archaeological data, Donna Pierce and Cordelia Snow (in Chapter 5) focus on personal items, furniture, religious items, textiles, clothing, ceramics, jewelry, and musical instruments such as organs, all brought from the south by trade caravans over the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Cunningham and Miller (in Chapter 6) maintain that the northernmost terminus of the Camino Real was Taos. Although documentary proof for this statement is scant, trade did extend north of Santa Fe on two or three different trails to Taos, where goods from New Spain were exchanged for Amerindian products at the annual trade fairs.

Ethnohistorian Dave Brugge draws from his knowledge of southwestern Amerindian cultures, and research mostly in published works, to examine an often neglected aspect of trade, the history of captives and slaves on the Camino Real (Chapter 7). Brugge provides background on captives traded among Amerindians in the Southwest before the arrival of the Spaniards and observes that the

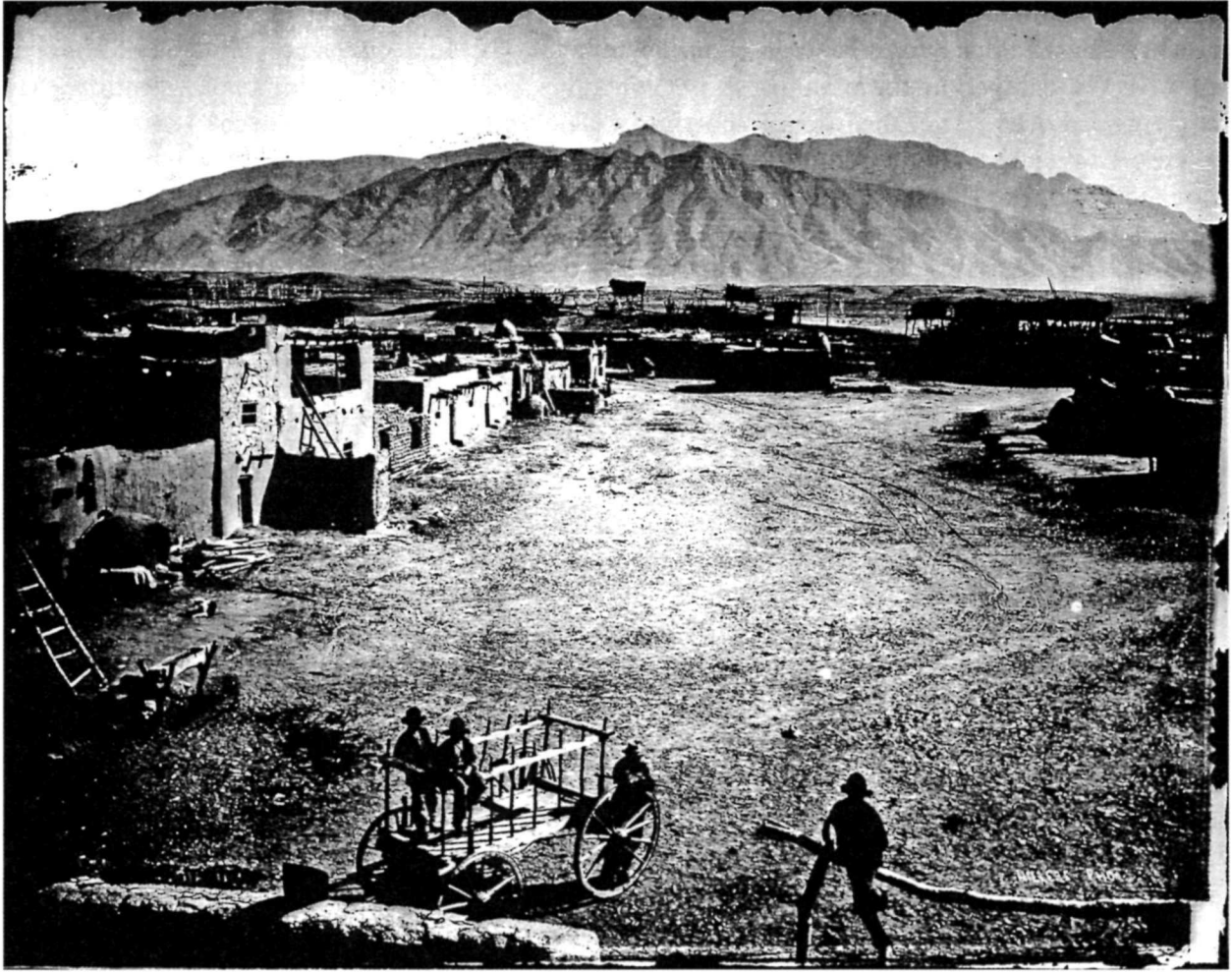


Fig. 25.3

Sandia Pueblo, 1880. Photo John Hillers. National Archives.

Camino Real de Tierra Adentro makes use of Indian trails that had been in use for centuries, even millennia, before the arrival of wheeled vehicles in the New World. He examines specific mention of slaves on Spanish exploratory ventures during the sixteenth century and notes that Juan de Oñate's followers brought some slaves north over the Camino Real in 1598. Brugge also observes that the first slaves taken from New Mexico southward over the trail were those captured in the Spanish battle with Acoma Pueblo in 1599, and he traces with specific examples the seventeenth-century practice of transporting slaves over the Camino Real.

In Chapter 10 Mark Winter examines Saltillo sarapes made in Coahuila and distributed over various trade routes, including the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. He analyzes the spinning, dyeing, and weaving in Saltillo, as well as the merchandising of sarapes at trade fairs there and the role these beautifully woven goods may have played in symbolizing the cultural identity of the wearers. Archaeologists David Hill and John Peterson discuss the transport of Oriental goods to New Mexico in Chapter 11. Chinese ceramics are found in very early sites (e.g., Oñate's original 1598 capital) as well as missions and trail-side *parajes*. Mexican ceramicist Patricia Fournier reports on the pottery found at one such site, the *paraje de San Diego*, in Chapter 12. In addition to a few sherds from a vessel that may have arrived in Mexico on the annual Manila galleon, more common types transported to New Mexico on the Camino Real include Mexican majolica and Spanish earthenwares.

Six of the studies in this volume concentrate upon cultural transmission, change, and exchange either along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro or at Santa Fe and other places in New Mexico. In Chapter 1, ethnohistorian and archaeologist Frances Levine notes that the Camino Real is often described as an “artery” or lifeline linking the colonists of colonial New Mexico with their New World motherland. The “new ideas and other intangibles” that came with the settlers to New Mexico are part of the significance of the road. Examining cultural contact and cultural exchange between Pueblos and Hispanos in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Levine also discusses accommodations of cultures and selective borrowing of customs practiced by both the Pueblos and Hispanos in the eighteenth century, resulting in the creation of a new social order in New Mexico. Her observation that roads “connect people as certainly as they link places” provides an added dimension to the significance of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. State representative and life-long Mesilla Valley resident Paul Taylor y Romero (in Chapter 22) offers an original observation that the Camino Real was a “vehicle” for the transmission of elements of culture. To illustrate his conclusion, Taylor discusses *dichos* (proverbs or sayings) and *cuentos* (folk stories or tales) derived from taped interviews with Hispanos, as well as family and religious considerations and practices.

The other essays in this category focus upon specific artists and artistic achievements in New Mexico, as well as items that were transported over the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Furniture conservator Keith Bakker uses shipping records, wills, inventories, and documents from the Spanish Archives of New Mexico in Chapter 9 to demonstrate that settlers and woodworkers (*carpinteros*) “brought European tools, technology, and design sensibilities to the province of New Mexico. They also brought many finely crafted wooden objects which had been fabricated in the cities of New Spain.” Bakker describes the tools, *carpinteros*, and products of furniture-making as a significant expression of New Mexico’s Spanish colonial culture, concluding that objects traded on the Camino Real were a critical element in defining the Spanish identity of many New Mexicans.

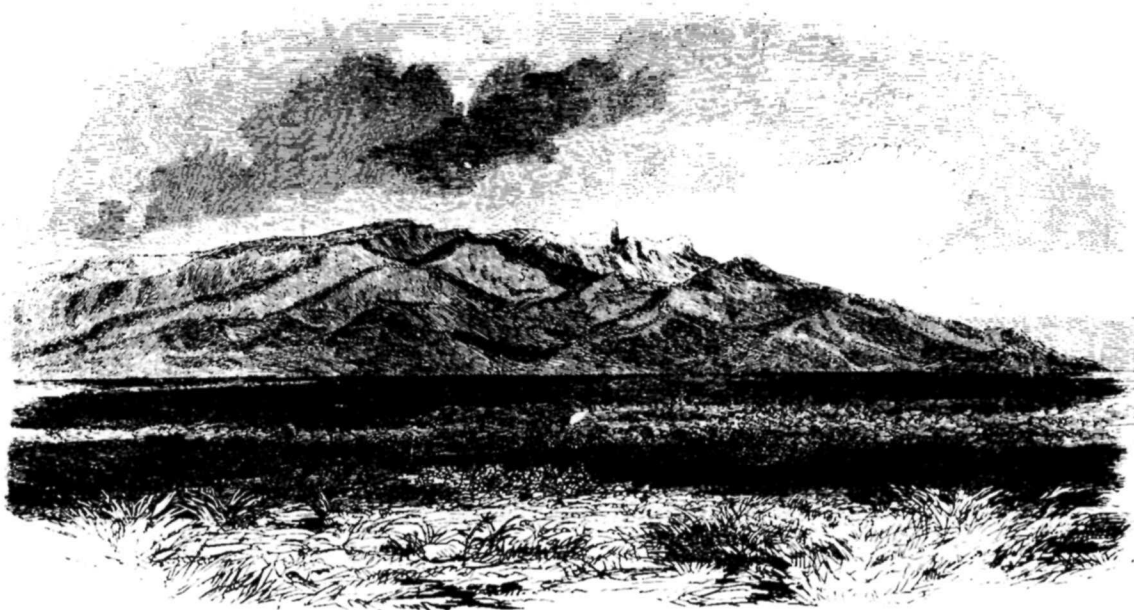


Fig. 25.4

Fra Cristóbal Mountains mark the northern end of the Jornada del Muerto.
 From W.W.H. Davis, *El Gringo*, New York, 1857. Reproduced in Andrew K. Gregg,
New Mexico in the Nineteenth Century: A Pictorial History,
 University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1968.

James E. Ivey notes in Chapter 13 that *retablos* (altar screens) either were made in Nueva Vizcaya and shipped in boxes over the Camino Real or were made locally by assembling pieces shipped principally from Mexico City. Using shipping records, church inventories and descriptions, and archaeological remains, Ivey discusses the origins of retablos, their shipment to New Mexico, and their construction and assembly in the “Last Place on Earth,” concluding that retablos in New Mexico could rival many of their contemporaries in other parts of New Spain. In Chapter 14, art historian Donna Pierce discusses religious imagery within churches—altar screens, columns, images, and paintings—relative to that of Spain and the other provinces of New Spain. Using archaeological evidence, inventories, and shipping records, Pierce observes that religious furniture and imagery were brought to New Mexico in various expeditions over the Camino Real, beginning with Juan de Oñate in 1598 and continuing with supply trains over the next two centuries.

In Chapter 16 Robin Farwell Gavin observes that the art of the Río Abajo below La Bajada has been virtually ignored. Gavin notes that trade caravans from Nueva Vizcaya reached settlements in the Río Abajo first, giving the residents easier access to merchandise than those in the Río Arriba. She describes craftsmen of the Río Abajo, such as *santero* (maker of holy images) Antonio Silva in the Tomé area during the early nineteenth century, and discusses items brought from Europe and New Spain, as well as those made by local artisans.

P E R S P E C T I V E S

To evaluate the significance of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro it is necessary to place the road in temporal and historical perspective. The Spanish term *camino real* literally means a royal road, but these roads were neither authorized by the king nor laid out by government officials. Instead, *caminos reales* were more accurately trails defined and developed over time for the use of colonists, merchants, ecclesiastics, government officials, and visitors. They served as primary routes for transportation, communication, and colonization. Furthermore, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was only one such trail during the Spanish colonial period, and its New Mexican portion was only a part of the overall trail between Mexico City, Zacatecas, Querétaro, Durango, Parral, and Chihuahua on the one hand and Santa Fe and other settlements in New Mexico on the other.¹ *Caminos reales*, often following ancient Amerindian trails used for centuries preceding Spanish contact, were established throughout New Spain, Central America, and South America during the Spanish colonial period (1519–1824). Two of them (outside New Mexico) were established in the American Southwest and northern Mexico. One ran from Monclova and San Juan Bautista in Coahuila to the province of Texas, specifically San Antonio and San Fernando de Béxar. This road, used earlier by explorers, soldiers, and missionaries, was developed for commerce and colonization during the eighteenth century. It reached San Antonio, then turned southeast to the Guadalupe River, and resumed its northeasterly direction to Los Adaes and Nacogdoches in eastern Texas (Foster 1995:130, 148, 150, 151, 173, 185, 200, 223, 306 n. 3, 312 n. 19, and map, p. 2). After the Spanish occupation of “Antigua California” (Baja California) and the establishment of the first Jesuit missions there in 1697, a *camino real* developed to connect northern missions on the peninsula with those of Loreto, La Paz, and San José del Cabo (Crosby 1994:196, 223, and map, p. 236). With the permanent occupation of Alta California (today’s state of California) at San Diego and Monterey in 1769–1770 and the subsequent establishment of twenty-one missions, four presidios, and three civil communities (San José, Los Angeles, and Branciforte), a *camino real* connected San Diego with Monterey and San Francisco. It was used for essentially the same purposes as the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (Caughey 1953:12; Jones 1979:230–231; Krell 1979:4, 245, 251; Weber 1992:344).



Fig. 25.5

Spanish carros and carretas on the Camino Real. Illustration José Cisneros. Collection of the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe. Reproduced in Marc Simmons, Carros y Carretas: Vehicular Traffic on the Camino Real and in Marta Weigle, ed., Hispanic Arts and Ethnohistory in the Southwest, Ancient City Press, Santa Fe, 1983.

Yet these *caminos reales* do not detract from the significance of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, either its New Mexican portion or the road in its totality from Mexico City through northern New Spain to El Paso del Norte and Santa Fe. This road was important for three overarching reasons. First, it was the primary route for exploration, conquest, and colonization of New Mexico. Colonists traveled both north and south over the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. They settled communities along the trail between El Paso del Norte and Santa Fe (earlier at San Juan del los Caballeros and San Gabriel de los Españoles). Franciscans established missions among the Pueblos and secular churches at such locations as Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and El Paso del Norte, thereby introducing and spreading Christianity. Military persons also used the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro for presidios or military garrisons at Santa Fe, El Paso del Norte, and San Elizario; for conducting inspections of New Mexico (e.g., Pedro del Rivera and the Marqués de Rubí); for campaigns against Amerindians (e.g., Diego de Vargas and Juan de Oñate); for expeditions during the Mexican-American War (e.g., Stephen Watts Kearny, Alexander Doniphan, and Sterling Price); for campaigns during the American Civil War by both Confederate and Union forces (e.g., Henry S. Sibley, John M. Chivington, and Edward R. S. Canby); and for escorting merchant caravans and mail deliveries.

Second, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was significant as the primary route of trade, supply, transportation, and communication between New Mexico on the one hand and the northern provinces of New Spain and Mexico City on the other. Products from Spain and other provinces of New Spain (later Mexico) were exchanged with those of New Mexico and later from the United States. Missionary supply caravans and later those of merchants brought supplies, people, livestock, and domestic and religious items to New Mexico. On their return journeys they carried New Mexican products—both Amerindian and Spanish—including hides, piñon nuts, and textiles southward for sale in northern New Spain and Mexico City.

Third, the social and cultural importance of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was profound. As people moved northward into New Mexico they brought with them ideas, practices, customs, traditions, and skills that became permanently implanted there. Music, sculpture, architecture, building construction (the use of straw as a binder for adobe bricks and *hornos* or beehive-shaped ovens, for example), furnishings for homes, textiles, ceramics, and the construction of *acequias* (irrigation ditches), dams, and bridges were all introduced into New Mexico. Likewise, the establishment of artisans (*santeros* and others) and customs (ceremonies such as Las Posadas, Los Pastores, Los Reyes Magos, La Conquistadora, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, and All Saints' Day) reached New Mexico, along with literature and traditional sayings. Finally, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro played a role in establishing the diverse populace of Amerindians, Spaniards, Mexicans, Anglo-Americans, and others that created New Mexico's multicultural society.

From Amerindian trails and pueblos to Spanish explorers, conquistadores, and settlers, along with merchants, ecclesiastics, soldiers, government officials, and artisans, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro had a significant role in the historical development of New Mexico for nearly three centuries. Even today, Interstate Highway 25 roughly parallels most of the route from El Paso to Santa Fe, serving as a principal connection between the United States and Mexico. Along with the Appalachian Trail, the Oregon Trail, the Santa Fe Trail, and other national historical trails, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro served as a primary route of historical, international, and lasting significance in the expansion and development of the United States. ♣



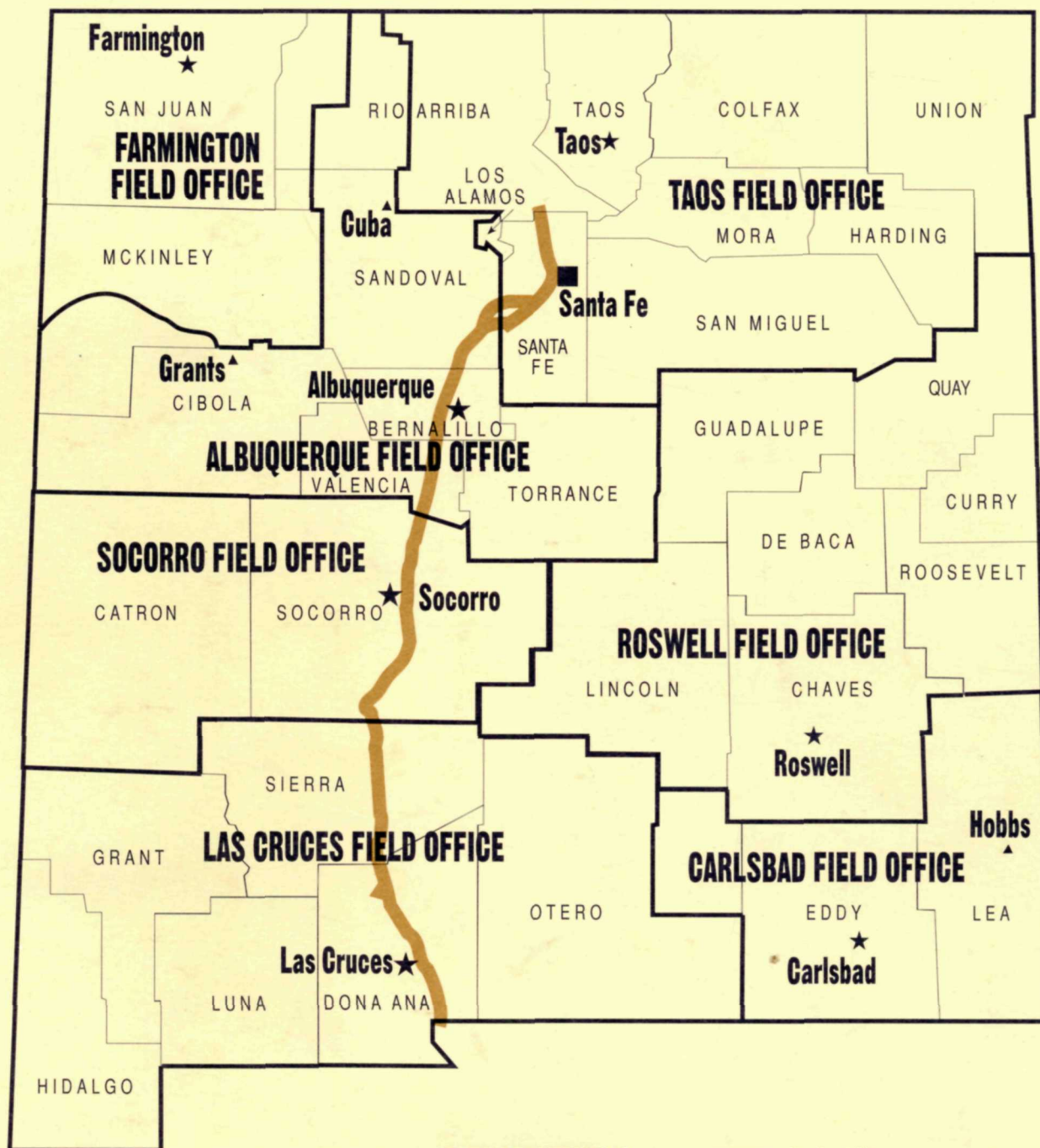
Fig. 25.6
Parallel trail ruts in the Jornada del Muerto north of Engle.
Photo Christine Preston. National Park Service, 1997.

NOTE

1. For an excellent description of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, principally that portion from Mexico City to Chihuahua City and El Paso del Norte, along with its alternate routes, see Swann 1982:61. Swann (pp. 64–65) also discusses trade between New Mexico and Nueva Vizcaya along the Camino Real which “provided a transportation line that connected many of these settlements [in Nueva Vizcaya] to each other and linked them with the New Mexico colony to the north.”

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